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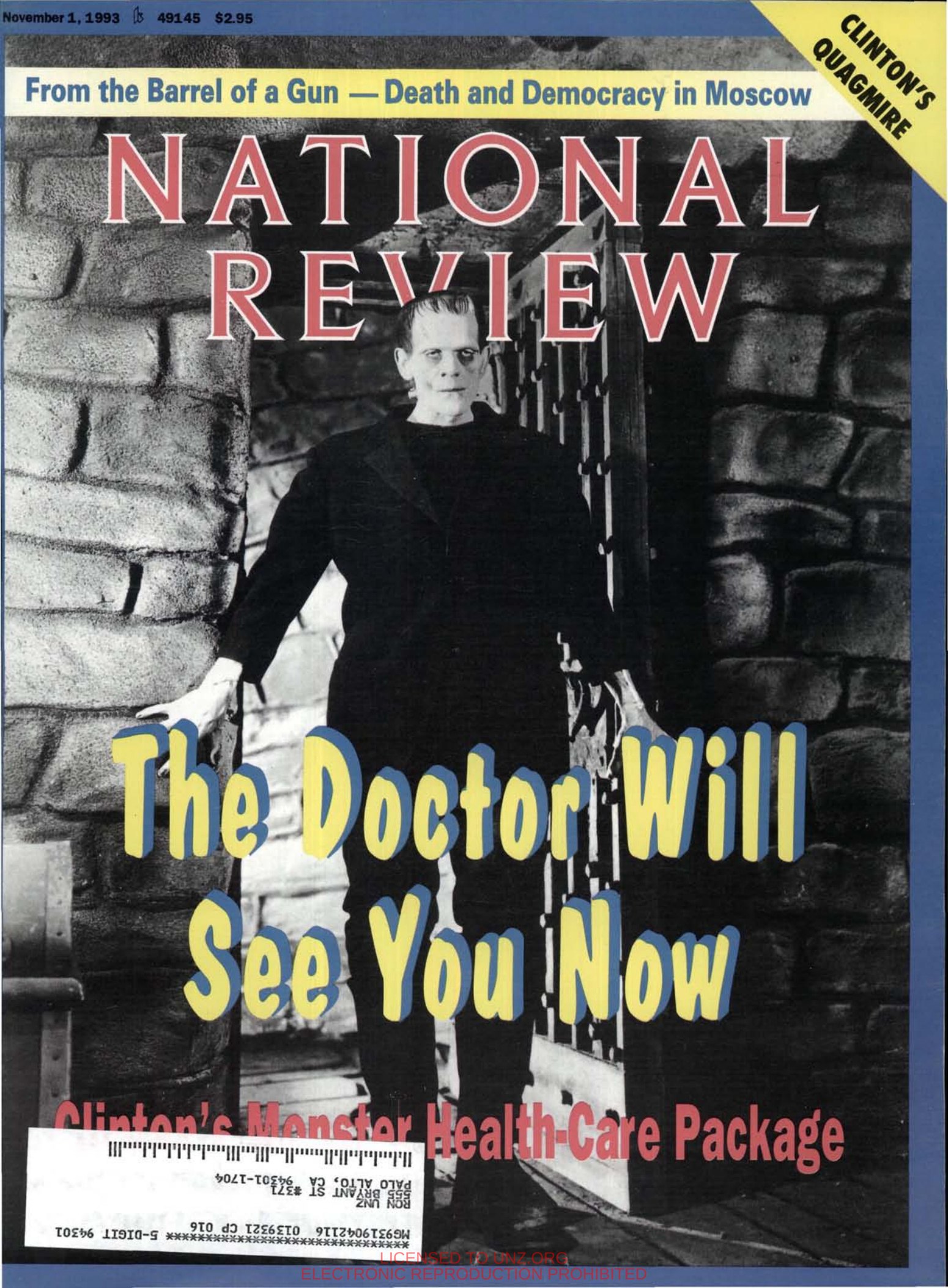

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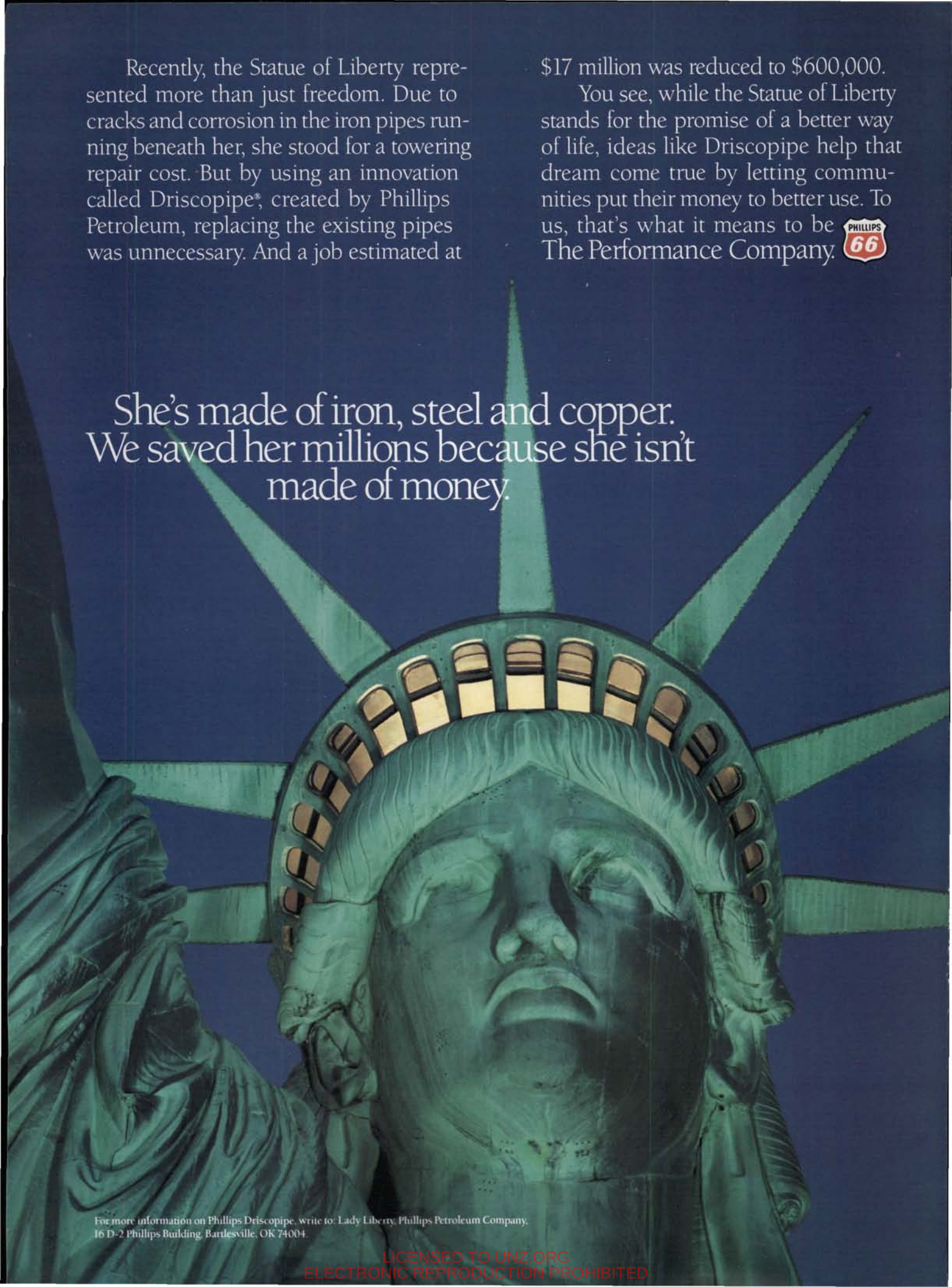

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NATIONAL REVIEW

NOVEMBER 1, 1993 VOL. XLV, NO. 21

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LETTERS

Misrepresenting Islam?

J. B. Kelly's otherwise accurate review of Bernard Lewis's *Islam and the West* ["The Last Crusade?" Aug. 23] omits the substantial—indeed, incalculable—contributions of Islamic scholars to Western civilization.

Despite the information in the book and its review, Islamic scholars contributed greatly to the preservation of Graeco-Roman classics, especially philosophical and medical works, during the Middle Ages. Ancient Greek manuscripts which had been translated into Latin by Jewish physicians and into Arabic by Islamic physicians were codified and preserved in the great libraries of such cities as Baghdad, Cairo, and Córdoba. These valuable manuscripts were later revivified and popularized during the Renaissance.

Islamic scholars kept the torch of Western knowledge burning when the Dark Ages had descended on Europe. These Islamic contributions should be considered not apart from the Judaeo-Christian Western tradition, but, like Roman culture before Constantine the Great and Christianization, as an integral part of our Western legacy.

Miguel A. Faria Jr., MD
Macon, Ga.

While J. B. Kelly perhaps accurately and thoroughly reviews Bernard Lewis's *Islam and the West*, he includes some misleading ideas about Muslim beliefs. These ideas, I understand, are in Mr. Kelly's review simply because they are in Mr. Lewis's book. Nonetheless, they should be pointed out.

Mr. Kelly writes: "A Muslim also has a duty to proselytize but must not himself be converted to another faith: the penalty for apostasy is death." Nowhere in the Holy Qur'an is there any mention of death as the punishment for apostates; everyone is free to choose his or her set of beliefs. In fact, the Qur'an specifically says in Chapter 2, Verse 257: "There is no compulsion in religion." To be sure, there are injunctions in the Qur'an regarding apostasy, but none from which any inference can be made that apostasy is punishable by death.

Elsewhere Mr. Kelly remarks: "Europe may well find itself, as in the Middle Ages, having to fend off the Muslim invader—without the spiritual backbone which medieval Christianity once gave it." This implies that Muslims are invaders, seeking to subjugate all others. Nothing could be further from the truth. Islam is tolerant of other faiths, enjoining its followers to live in peace and forbidding forced conversions. Indeed, Islam is the only religion which teaches its followers to believe in the historical figures of other faiths as prophets of God.

It is true that some Muslims have the beliefs that Mr. Kelly describes. But it is wholly incorrect to attribute such ideas to *all* Muslims. Islam is perhaps the most misunderstood of religions. One billion practicing Muslims can't all be terrorists: the overwhelming majority are peace-loving, democratic, open-minded individuals with a sincere respect for peoples of other faiths.

Arshad Khan
Chino Hills, Calif.

I am not sure what Dr. Faria is reproaching me with. No one in his right mind would deny the contribution of Muslim scholars to European civilization. My point was that the Muslim world during the Middle Ages, and even later, was so convinced of the superiority of its religion and culture over all others that it deemed contemporary Europe unworthy of study. To write off the history of medieval Europe as "the Dark Ages" is to obscure the reality of what was achieved in those centuries, not least the preservation in the great monasteries of the tradition of Graeco-Roman scholarship.

Mr. Arshad Khan's suggestion that I derived my "misleading" ideas about Islam from reading Professor Lewis's book, though no doubt kindly meant, is a bit wide of the mark. So, too, is his Walt Disney version of Islamic history. The tolerance accorded by Muslims to the adherents of other faiths extended only to the conquered. It certainly didn't extend to Christians beyond the pale of Islam, or, indeed, to other Muslims. Sectarian conflicts within Islam were conducted, whatever the Qur'an might enjoin, with a ferocity equal to that displayed in the wars with Christendom—just as Europe's own wars of religion were fought with supreme contempt for the Biblical injunction, "Thou shalt not kill." —JBK

Risky Business

Your claim ["The Week," July 19] that "power-grabbing scaremongers" at the EPA used "bogus science" to determine that passive smoking causes cancer would be more convincing if you hadn't made some astonishingly inaccurate claims. Among the more blatant:

1. A Class A carcinogen is not the EPA's "most deadly" category. The EPA's categories have to do not with how deadly a chemical is—how high the risk of cancer is among exposed people—but simply with whether it is a possible, probable, or known carcinogen. A known carcinogen may be more deadly than, less deadly than, or just as deadly as a probable carcinogen.

2. The "statistician's rulebook" does not set 95 per cent as the accepted "risk of chance association." I doubt that one legitimate statistician would make that claim. Different confidence levels indicate different levels of certainty. A 99 per cent confidence level is more certain than a 95 per cent level, which in turn is more certain than a 90 per cent level. No one level is universally used or accepted.

3. Perhaps most important of all, statisticians do not "conventionally reject the significance of odds ratios of less than 2.0." Again, I doubt you could find one statistician to support that. The odds ratio needed for significance depends on the sample size. In large enough samples, a ratio of 1.2 would be significant; in smaller samples, a ratio of 2.0 would be insignificant. An odds ratio of 1.2 indicates a 20 per cent increase in cancer risk. Are you really suggesting the government should not attempt to protect people from that level of risk?

A publication as well known as yours should have no trouble securing the advice of a competent statistician.

Jack Kaplan
Hamden, Conn.

We certainly do deny the right of a government to "protect" citizens on the basis of a statistical study. People take risks every day, and they can make their own decisions about how much tobacco smoke to tolerate. Restaurant owners and workplace management may have to get involved; the Federal Government does not. As for the challenge to find a statistician who rejects the significance of risk ratios of less than 2.0, we can cite many names—Feinstein, Gross, Wynder, Cornfield, Enstrom, Wehner . . . And Environ-

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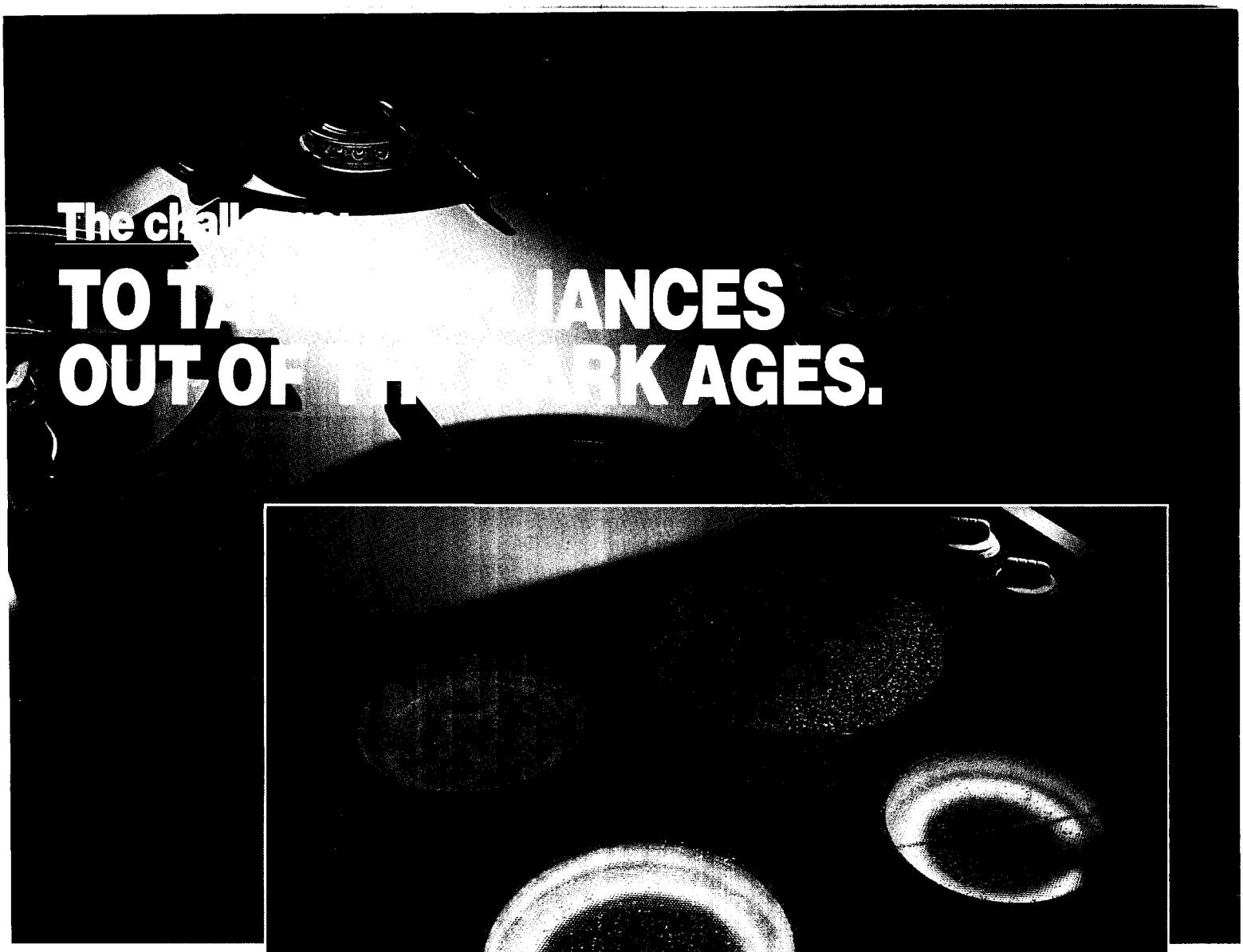

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ment International *(1992, Vol. 18, p. 331) polled 1,292 epidemiologists, toxicologists, and other health-risk scientists. Thirty-seven per cent called risk ratios of less than 2.0 "not very useful." Fifty-five per cent dismissed the value of risk ratios of less than 1.5. On that basis the EPA finding that second-hand smoke has a risk ratio of 1.2 is meaningless. The normal confidence interval is 95 per cent and the EPA began by using that. Only when it failed to get a result at 95 per cent did it drop the interval to 90 per cent—as clear a case of cooking the books as one could find.* —ED.

A Non-Story?

James MacGuire exhibits a rather naïve view of the media ["No Sex, No Violence," June 21]. He wonders why major coverage from one paper or news show does not get followed up by others, citing NBC's report on NAMBLA. Being the Bronx High School of Science teacher alluded to in his article, I am in a position to enlighten him.

This particular story was not picked up because it had no news value. NBC, through innuendo, gave the incorrect impression that meetings of NAMBLA were criminally tinged. Nothing could be further from the truth. In NAMBLA's 15 years, the worst that can be said of it is that it is very controversial and has no public-relations skills. As for myself, in 31 years of teaching I have never been so presumptuous as to use my position for anything other than teaching science. Never, by word or deed, have I given a hint of doing anything else.

It is hard to believe that Mr. MacGuire is not aware that much of television is entertainment designed to titillate and win audience share. In the process, truth takes second place to expediency. This is but one more example of NBC creating news rather than reporting it.

It is ironic that Mr. MacGuire's piece was part of a wider feature on "The Decline of American Journalism." In missing the point, he seems to be more part of the problem than part of the solution.

Peter Melzer
Bronx, N.Y.

The worst that could be said of NAMBLA? By its own admission, NAMBLA (the North American Man–Boy Love Association) advocates the removal of age laws for consensual sex. Its bulletin is replete with photos of undressed children. Its recorded message entreats men to be "proud, above all, proud that you are a boy lover." We take Mr. Melzer at his word regarding his in-school activities. However, Mr. Melzer told an undercover cop who penetrated NAMBLA in the mid 1980s that he had traveled to the Philippines to have sex with under-age children. Since the NR *article ran, Ray Kerrison of the* New York Post *and Richard Vigilante of* Newsday *have written follow-up columns. On September 22 Edward Stancik, the Special Commissioner for Investigation for the New York City schools, released a 48-page report detailing Mr. Melzer's NAMBLA involvement and recommending his dismissal. Incoming schools chancellor Ramon Cortines said, "Mr. Melzer's advocacy and promotion of illegal activities make him unfit to serve as a classroom model." Apparently the story* did *have news value; every media outlet in the city covered it. Mr. Melzer has been assigned a desk job at central school-board headquarters. The board of education voted unanimously to file disciplinary charges, and the next step is a hearing to determine whether he will be dismissed.* —JM

Socrates Acquitted

William Tucker makes the astonishing assertion ["Monogamy and Its Discontents," Oct. 4] that "Socrates, remember, was condemned to death for luring the youth of Athens into homosexuality." Where in the world did Tucker pick up such a notion? Socrates was charged with not believing in the gods of the city of Athens, and with corrupting the young. Corrupting the young meant, primarily and essentially, teaching them not to believe in the gods of the city of Athens. There is not a trace of a suggestion that I know of in any of the contemporary accounts of his life—Aristophanes, Xenophon, and Plato—that Socrates was himself a pederast, or induced others in that direction. In fact, the opposite is true.

The only Socratic work that can be considered doctrinal on this subject is Plato's *Laws*. Although the principal interlocutor is the Athenian Stranger, Aristotle in the *Politics* refers to him as Socrates. Among the laws regarding sex it is laid down that "no one is to dare to touch any well-born and free person except the woman who is his wife, and no one is to sow unhallowed, bastard sperm in concubines or go against nature and sow sterile seed in males." Moreover, "erotic activity between males" is to be abolished "altogether." (*Laws*, 841 d to 842 a, Thomas Pangle, trans.) For Plato and Aristotle no less than for St. Paul, homosexuality was an unnatural vice.

Harry V. Jaffa
Claremont, Calif.

I stand corrected. —WT

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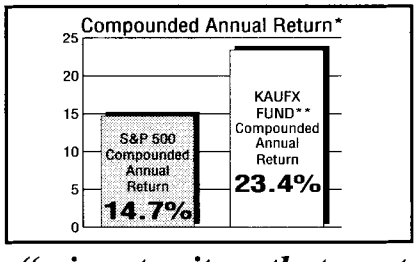

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FROM THE EDITOR

Don't Laugh—You're Next

■ During the L.A. riots, big-media reporters took bias a stage further. Instead of describing what they saw—looting, attacks on passers-by, burning-out of Koreans (called "ethnic cleansing" when it occurs in Bosnia)—they reported a liberal analysis of these events. A rioter hitting a passer-by—rage at the neglect of the cities. A policeman hitting a rioter—police brutality, revealing racism. A rioter hitting a policeman—insurrection!

So I wondered idly how big media would cover an actual insurrection. My curiosity was satisfied during the Russian Parliament's insurrection against Boris Yeltsin.

It goes without saying that they covered it bravely. Reporters and photographers actually die on these occasions, as several did during the Communist–Fascist attack on the television station, Ostankino. However, they reported not the Russian reality, but an imposition of American liberalism into a Russian context.

Prior to the actual fighting, they worried endlessly about Yeltsin's violation of "the constitution," as if it were a democratic structure instead of a temporary makeshift thrown together during Communism's decline.

Rutskoi, Khasbulatov, and the assorted centrists, nomenklaturists, and adventurists were referred to almost invariably as "the embattled parliamentarians" as if they were Pym or Hampden resisting Charles I.

Above all, the Western media were anxious lest awful consequences befall Yeltsin if he were to resort to violence. (President Clinton, it must be said, was entirely realistic and refused to declare it out of order.)

In fact, the opposite of all these instincts was the case. Such is the respect for authority in Russia that Yeltsin would have been damaged had he settled the dispute *without* force.

And given that the Parliament represented the stalemate between a Communist Soviet Union and a democratic Russia, a compromise with it would merely have delayed the final demise of the *ancien régime*. Indeed, by in effect following the advice of the Western press and delaying his attack, Yeltsin not only imperiled his own victory; he also probably ensured that more people died.

That Western reporters could be so consistently wrong suggests that they are imprisoned in a parochial world view, probably the result of growing up in a peaceful liberal society. They have forgotten that it is ultimately based on force. A temporary delusion, alas. A Russian mob attacked Ostankino TV station; the next L.A. riot may go after a TV station rather than some Korean grocers.

■ I read that some black leaders are alleging racism because unidentified black corpses are more likely to be cremated than white ones.

Well, I suppose death *is* unfair, but this particular example surprised me. Growing up as Catholics at a time when cremation was forbidden as a matter of Church discipline, I and my friends felt deprived. Cremation seemed neat, hygienic, and cheap, and it avoided the risk of being buried alive (which worried us a good deal).

Because Catholics were excluded by Church discipline from these benefits, and Methodists by adhering to tradition, cremation was largely confined to Episcopalians and agnostics—in other words, the smart set.

As 15-year-old boys, we had few ways of breaking into high society; cremation seemed the best bet. We talked a good deal about this; then something else came along—existentialism, the hula-hoop, Edith Piaf singing "Milord," I forget which offhand—and we moved on.

If cremation has fallen down the social scale since then, I must point out that this coincides with the Catholic Church's lifting of its prohibition. Is this another example of anti-Catholic bias in our society? I think we should be told. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Looking toward '94: Decision by California conservative Rep. **Chris Cox** not to challenge Sen. **Dianne Feinstein** next year leaves only former Rep. **Bill Dannemeyer** and freshman liberal Rep. **Michael Huffington** in the field. Huffington is considered front-runner because of his wealth. . . . In Minnesota, conservatives have been urging freshman Rep. **Rod Grams** to run for seat vacated by embattled Sen. **David Durenberger**. Grams, remember, took lead in gathering support for alternatives (containing tax cuts and mandatory spending reductions) to **Bill Clinton**'s budget. . . . In Montana, Democratic former Sen. **John Melcher**, defeated for re-election in 1988 by Republican **Conrad Burns**, has announced he will avenge the loss next year. . . . In House, though **Newt Gingrich** is favorite to win post of retiring Minority Leader **Bob Michel**, there's a move to put women in other leadership posts. Liberal **Nancy Johnson** (Conn.) is much talked about; conservatives are pushing instead for **Barbara Vucanovich** of Nevada, who has put in ten good years of service. Question may be moot: Rep. Johnson may leave House for gubernatorial race now that **Lowell Weicker** is not seeking re-election. . . . And looking further ahead, outgoing Joint Chiefs Chairman **Colin Powell** is mentioned as possible presidential candidate. He receives high marks in opinion polls; in recent *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll, 62 per cent of blacks and 60 per cent of whites hold positive views of him. However, he refuses to answer questions about political future—even party affiliation.

■ Book detailing **Al Gore**'s vision of reinventing government cost $170,000 to print—more than three times normal cost for government book. Government Printing Office retail price: $14; private publisher: $9. . . . DNC is sending out a letter from President Clinton soliciting money for **Democratic Action Network**, the group campaigning for the health-care proposal, which has not yet been released to Congress. . . . Little Rock's **Rose** law firm—alma mater of **Hillary Clinton**, **Webster Hubbell**, and **Vincent Foster**—will soon open Washington, D.C., office. . . . **Bob Dole** has attached amendment to Transportation appropriation bill that will give $150,000 to those fired from White House travel office to help pay legal bills. . . . Clinton's first attorney-general nominee, **Zoë Baird**, was named to Foreign Policy Advisory Board, as was former Joint Chiefs Chairman **William Crowe**. . . . Leaders of the Black Caucus were so busy fighting over who would sit at President's table at recent fundraising dinner that not one of them greeted Clinton as he arrived. . . . Veteran Black Caucus member and strong pro-union man **John Conyers** (D., Mich.) has said he's leaning toward supporting NAFTA. **Norman Dicks** (D., Wash.), nine-term House veteran from pro-union district and presumed NAFTA foe, has come out in favor.

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"Girls, let me introduce one of our great success stories."

■ St. Petersburg Mayor **Anatoly Sobchak** and **Mikhail Gorbachev** are both hinting they will oppose **Boris Yeltsin** in presidential elections. . . . Yeltsin can count on continued public support, says Sovietologist **Peter Reddaway**, if he can strengthen security and public safety; but "I doubt if a law-and-order campaign will be effective for long." . . . Only officers manned Yeltsin-loyalist tanks that attacked Russian White House—Yeltsin military advisor, **Dmitri Volkogonov**, planned it that way "to prevent the deaths of Russian 18-year-old conscripts." . . . German Defense Minister **Volker Rühe**, countering a letter from Yeltsin warning against NATO's expanding eastward without including Russia, said, "Germany does not want to become the peripheral state of the affluent zone." . . . Corporal **Hussen Farah**, son of outlawed clan leader **Mohammed Farah Aidid**, was trained as an artillery man and served in U.S. Marines in Somalia as interpreter early this year. He has since returned to States. . . . NAFTA is getting tangled up in Mexico's 1994 presidential election, with President **Carlos Salinas de Gortari** postponing naming his PRI successor. He also warned visiting congressmen that Mexico might void agreement after January 1.

■ "Film is our religion," director **Oliver Stone** said recently to U. Va. students. Stone is licking his wounds after Chinese government denied him permission to shoot planned film on **Mao Tse-tung** in their country. . . . ABC News plans to create position of religion correspondent. Remember that networks were criticized for poor coverage of Pope **John Paul**'s visit and for lack of understanding of **David Koresh**'s Branch Davidians. . . . Also at ABC, **Peter Jennings** told *TV Guide* that his show's "American Agenda" has "revolved around a liberal axis." He says he wants to "pay more attention to what conservatives are saying." Their views are often "more provocative and less predictable."

■ **Lauch Faircloth**, who joined fellow North Carolina Sen. **Jesse Helms** in filibuster against Justice appointee **Walter Dellinger**, said to his colleague on swearing-in day last January: "How does it feel to be the liberal in the delegation, Jesse?"

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THE WEEK

■ Republicans are worried about more casualties as that ruthless warlord attempts to expand his territory. Then again, maybe Newt Gingrich will take a kinder, gentler path to the GOP House leadership.

■ In fact, Congressman Bob Michel's announcement that he will not be seeking re-election next year may set off a real race to succeed him in the Minority Leader post he has held for 12 years. Mr. Gingrich and Gerry Solomon are already lining up supporters, although Henry Hyde—who has declared himself "an aspirant with a small 'a' "—rightly points out that it's a "political eternity" until December 1994, when the election will be held. Even so, Mr. Gingrich's entry means a contest to replace him in the number-two Whip's job. Conservatives Bob Walker of Pennsylvania, Tom DeLay of Texas, and Bill McCollum of Florida are interested. Which is fine, but conservatives—a clear majority among House Republicans—must be careful lest their rivalries elect moderates. Aspirants should agree on clear conservative positions on key issues such as health care, welfare, and tax policy, and avoid compromising for the sake of the moderate swing vote. Hang together, boys, not separately.

■ "The principles that guide your effort and most of the major policy choices you have made mirror my own," a senator recently told Hillary Clinton as he promised to co-sponsor her health-care-reform legislation. The senator was not Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts: it was Republican James Jeffords of Vermont. But with Mr. Jeffords supporting controversial Clinton nominees (he voted for three of the four worst) and now embracing a government-directed overhaul of one-seventh of the economy, that's beginning to look like a distinction without a difference.

■ If Senator Phil Gramm expects conservative support for any future presidential bid, he has badly hurt his chances by his decision to pay Mikhail Gorbachev $50,000 for a speech to a National Republican Senatorial Committee fundraiser. Mr. Gorbachev is a reactionary figure. He backed the Rutskoi/Khasbulatov mafia against Boris Yeltsin, and his foundation is a nest of ex-apparatchiks trying to worm their way back into power. Senator Gramm won't even get any credit from liberals, who jumped off the Gorbachev bandwagon just before it went over the cliff.

■ Lowell Weicker retires from politics embodying a hobgoblin consistency to the end—the unwavering instinct to say mostly wrong things as bumptiously as possible. It would take a lot to lift such a twenty-stone narcissist to national prominence, or to lift him period, but Watergate did it. He spent the years sounding off on every subject he knew nothing about, of which there was a multitude. In 1988, conservative Republicans, led by BUCKPAC, provided the marginal votes that turned him out of the Senate. But two years later the people of Connecticut punished themselves for having tolerated him all those years by electing him governor. He rewarded them by imposing the first income tax in state history. In leaving public life, he joins the pestilential nuisances who write for autographs, and the people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs.

■ Hillary's health plan is somewhat less complex if you boil it down to its basic element: Take two tax increases and call me in the morning.

■ The dismantling of the Reagan revolution in the United States may be good news—for Sweden. Long known for its stratospheric tax rates—and the commensurate sloth of its labor force—Sweden, now under a conservative coalition headed by Prime Minister Carl Bildt, has cut the top income-tax rate from 85 per cent to 50 per cent. As a result, a resident of Stockholm now faces lower marginal rates than his counterpart in New York City, where the combined federal, state, and local tax bite is now up to 52 per cent. Sweden has also cut government expenditure, slashed welfare payments, and started an ambitious privatization program. School vouchers? They've already been introduced in the Swedish public-school system. The Swedes seem genuinely sick of Big Brother. Nevertheless, no one is likely to mistake Sweden for Hong Kong, Taiwan, or other bastions of capitalism. The Social Democrats, who ruled the

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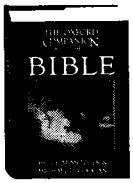
Today's Most Wanted List



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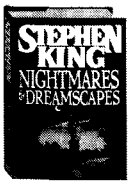

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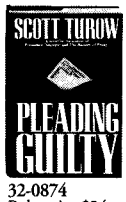

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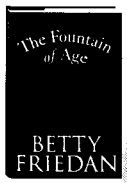

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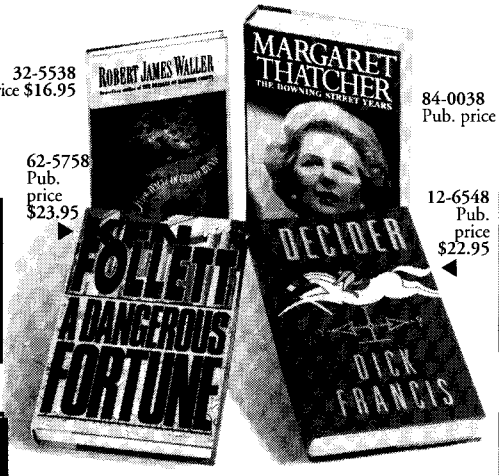

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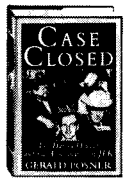

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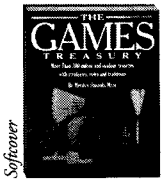

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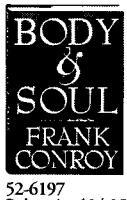

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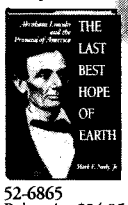

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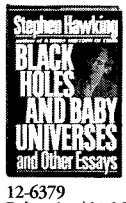

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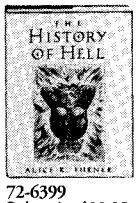

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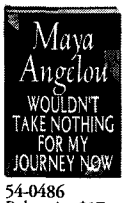

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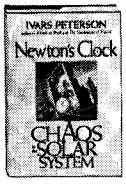

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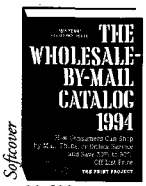

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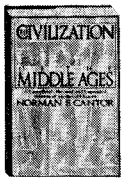

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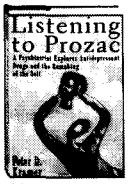

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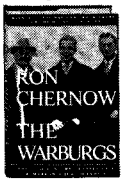

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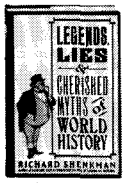

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country for most of this century, are obstructing this *perestroika*. But that sucking sound may well prove to be capital leaving Bill Clinton's America for Carl Bildt's Sweden.

■ The Clinton Administration could be facing legal troubles. Some believe that every time the President's foreign-policy team convenes, royalties should be paid to the estate of the Keystone Kops.

■ If there's one species not even slightly endangered, it's the minke whale. The Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) says there are about a million worldwide and nearly 100,000 in the North Atlantic, and the numbers are rising. Yet, under pressure from the environmentalist and animal-rights movements, the IWC recently reaffirmed the minke whale as "endangered." Now the IWC is being egged on by the United States. If Commerce Secretary Ron Brown has his way, the U.S. will slap trade sanctions on Norway because it has announced its intention to resume the catch of minke whales, of which 296 are to be taken this year. The Norwegians argue that the controlled taking of a plentiful marine resource like the minke whale is consistent with the environmental principle of sustainable development, and that the IWC is the captive of vegetarian zealots. That's correct, and it would be absurd for the U.S. on behalf of whales to impose trade sanctions on Norway it has never imposed on China on behalf of human beings.

■ The fashion industry has found religion. Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bergdorf Goodman, and just about every other high-toned designer or retailer you can think of have simultaneously introduced fashion lines dominated by monks' robes, nuns' robes, Hasidic frock coats, and crucifixes everywhere, typically slung from the shoulder of scanty black wool tunics over see-through nylon-lace bell-bottoms. In its 150-page catalogue, Neiman-Marcus features no fewer than fifty crosses. The designers promote their wares with pious references to the Decade of Austerity, while others point to Stephen Carter's new book *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religous Devotion*. But as Rabbi Barry Freundel writes in his review of Mr. Carter's book (see p. 62), religious devotion has *not* been trivialized, at least not in the minds of believers. It is quite on the rise. That's what, in our view, the new fashion is all about. Being composed of the same types of people who inhabit the universities, the movie industry, and the art world, the fashion industry is deeply uncomfortable with the notion of serious faith. This is its devilishly shrewd response. As Professor Margaret Miles of Harvard Divinity School has said in the *New York Times*, "The way to discount a symbol is not to walk away from it and ignore it, but place it in a decorative context." In other words, put a cross in a bucket of urine, and you've still got a religious symbol, capable of igniting righteous passion. But put it on a pretty model as she saunters down the runway, and you've got a mere fashion accessory. Clearly the cultural Left is honing its methods.

■ CAMPUS WATCH: George Mason University law professor Michael Krauss wanted to illustrate for students in his first-year torts class how certain hurtful words might prompt legal action. Mission accomplished. Mr. Krauss spun before his class a hypothetical example of the KKK carrying signs reading "Kill the Niggers" in a predominantly black neighborhood. Soon, students were circulating a petition deploring Mr. Krauss's insensitivity and demanding that the N-word be banned from classrooms. No one has lodged protests against the students who in the course of reporting Mr. Krauss's indiscretion must have uttered the offending word—at least not *yet*.

■ Tom Selleck, *NR* loyalist, is one of the leaders of an impressive new coalition of civic-minded Americans called "Character Counts." Its aim is to refocus the national discussion on the crucial role of instilling values, character, and personal responsibility in forming our nation's youth. "Situational ethics" is out; basic morality is in. Teamed with Barbara Jordan, along with Al Shanker, LeVar Burton, and others, Mr. Selleck is spokesman for the coalition of some thirty major service organizations that work with young people—from the YMCA and YMHA, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, 4-H, Big Brother/Big Sister, and Little League baseball to the National Urban League, American Red Cross, Covenant House, and National Catholic Educational Association. The brainchild of the Josephson Institute of Ethics in Marina del Rey, California, Character Counts can be reached at 800-777-2662. We congratulate Mr. Selleck and wish the Coalition well.

■ A topless dancer in Florida has been arrested on accusations that she stabbed her boyfriend, burned the body, ran the skeletal remains through a wood-

Knee-Deep in Somalia

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chipping mulch machine, embedded the bone chips in concrete, broke the dried concrete into bits, and threw the concrete chunks, piece by piece, along Interstate 95. The man is listed as "missing."

■ We just had an unsettling thought. What if the Clinton health plan was dreamed up by the same people who reinvented cable-TV regulation?

Mr. Clinton's Quagmire?

SOMALIA was a fiasco waiting to happen. The gap between our ambitious objectives and our modest military effort was too vast. This Administration, having inherited a limited commitment and a strong military presence, expanded the first and contracted the second out of misplaced ideological devotion to "multilateralism." Eliot Cohen ("A Nasty Little War," p. 50) describes the price that has been paid.

There are both lessons to learn and actions to take. The broad lesson is that noble intentions are no substitute for strategy. This country cannot get into the business of intervening in conflicts with inadequate forces, nebulous concepts of why we're there, and incoherent multinational systems of command and control. There may be humanitarian missions that make sense—when the distress is caused by famine or pestilence, not by civil war or political anarchy. But as Somalia has shown, it is self-delusion to imagine that an army intervening to halt civil disorder is engaged in a purely humanitarian mission. Whatever its intentions, it will eventually take one side or another in the local dispute and find that it has made enemies thereby. American soldiers will then die. If we are to justify risking that, intervention must have some reason of national interest, a clear aim, and a credible strategy to achieve it.

The U.S., as a world-wide economic power, has a general interest in securing the sea lanes and protecting commerce. But neither we nor our allies have an interest in restoring order in the remoter trouble spots of Africa or Asia which are a nuisance mainly to themselves. Somalia is such a spot. It might perhaps have been of strategic importance to Egypt, in which case the U.S. would have been justified in lending support to an Egyptian intervention. But Somalia seems to have been an interest of Mr. Boutros-Ghali rather than of the Egyptian government. He was the tail that wagged the U.S. dog.

Having intervened, we had no clear idea of how to leave the country in better shape than we found it. If anarchy was the problem, would it not revive on our departure? If "nation-building" (i.e., establishing a permanent political stability) was the solution, who would stick around for twenty years to accomplish it? For *we* would not do so; even humanitarian imperialism is not in our genes. One possible solution, as Paul Johnson has argued in these pages, is a long trusteeship exercised either by relatively stable local powers, or by former colonial ones, or by some combination of the two. The U.S. might have aimed at that, even insisted on it as a *quid pro quo* for our initial leadership. If no such commitments were forthcoming, we should have declined to get involved.

But if something like that was our aim in Somalia, it could only have been achieved by overwhelming force. We might have intervened to crush the local warlords, handed over to a UN trusteeship administration, and departed. Instead, we negotiated with the anarchs, establishing a flimsy structure of order bound eventually to fall in on our heads. And because the Clinton Administration lingered in pursuit of "assertive multilateralism," rather than pulling out completely when the humanitarian mission could plausibly have been declared a success, that has now happened.

Paradoxically, we now have both interest and aim in Somalia. The interest is to establish that the U.S. cannot be manipulated by killing American soldiers; the aim is to leave soon but in good order, having punished our enemies. Mr. Clinton has grasped aim and interest, but he remains fuzzy on strategy. To set a date for departure is to ensure resistance until it happens. To add incrementally to our troop levels is to announce that we will protect ourselves, but not much more. To talk of negotiating with all factions is to invite the chaos which is the President's argument for not leaving forthwith. To do all three is to prolong, not end, the agony—and thus in six months to leave Somalia much as we found it but with the reputation of our own power diminished.

There is no sign yet that Mr. Clinton has learned these lessons. And Bosnia beckons . . .

Golden State Opportunity

CALIFORNIA'S Proposition 174 has the opportunity to do for education in the 1990s what Proposition 13 did for tax cuts in the 1970s. If it passes on November 2, it will fundamentally change American education—and transform the future of American politics.

Proposition 174 would allow parents to choose the best school for their children by providing them with vouchers redeemable at a private or religious school for about $2,600, or at a public school, where they would be worth the full $5,200. By allowing parents to choose the public, private, or religious school their children attend, this plan would introduce much-needed competition and accountability into the sys-

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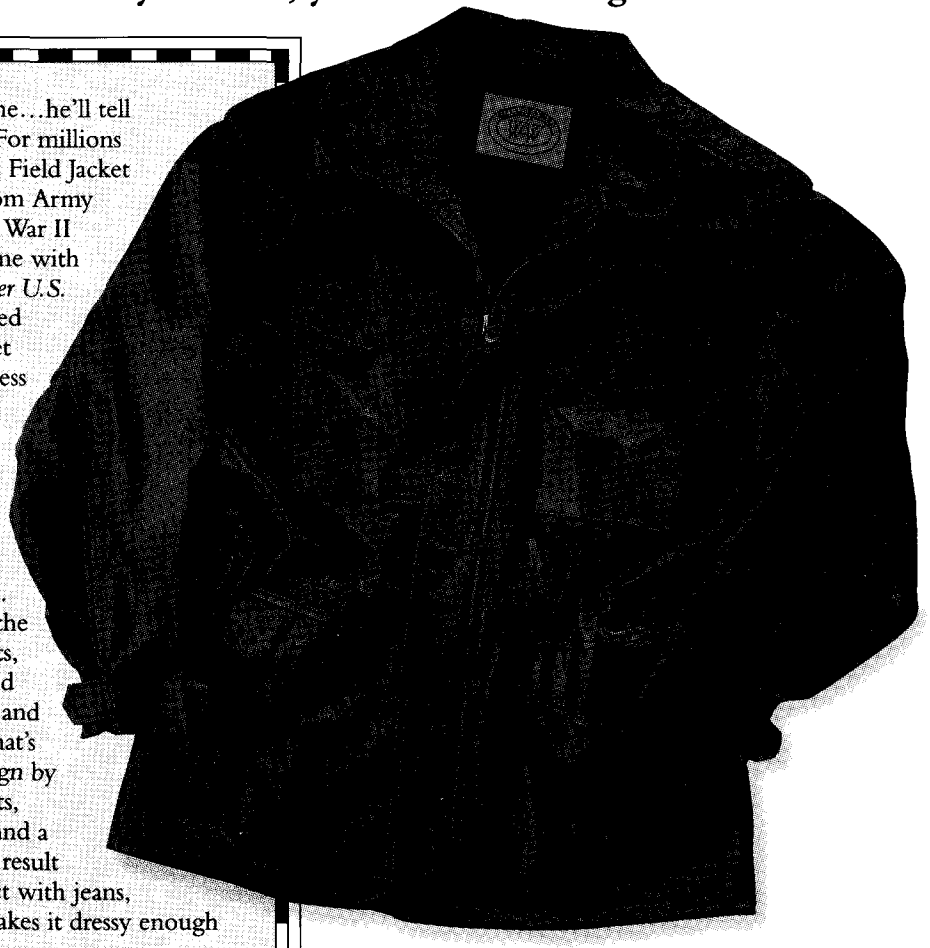

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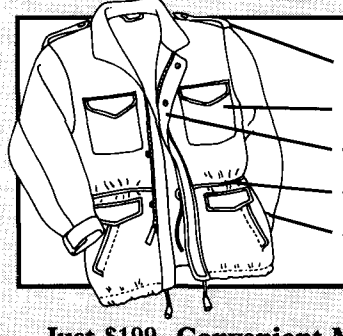

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tem, break up an inefficient and unresponsive monopoly, and return decision-making authority, and responsibility, to parents.

Also, Proposition 174 would very likely save taxpayers money, which is why three Nobel Laureates (including Milton Friedman), more than 140 leading economists, and every major anti-tax group in the state have endorsed it. And because parents would be able to choose environments that affirm their own values rather than undermine them (as is now too often the case), a wide array of pro-family and religious groups support Proposition 174.

In short, school choice is the *sine qua non* of real education reform. But it is worth considering some of its wider political implications.

1. It is overwhelmingly popular among certain traditionally non-conservative groups—lower-income and minority citizens whose children suffer most from the poor performance of public schools. Here is an opportunity to join with new allies in pursuit of a common political purpose. Take the case of Marvin Jackson, a South-Central Los Angeles father of five, who comes from a traditionally liberal family. Here is Mr. Jackson's eloquent case for school choice (told to the *Los Angeles Times*): "The thing about the voucher is it could be used to get local control of our

RIGHT DATA

The Dream Car

HELPING DETROIT develop a car that gets 80 miles to the gallon is but one of many technological collaborations planned by the Clinton Administration. The master plan would shift a minimum of $30 billion from the Pentagon's research budget to fund advanced research in ceramics, computer software, robotics, biotechnology, and other "critical technologies."

The assumption, of course, is that the private sector skimps on R&D. Not so:

For decades the Federal Government, mainly through its defense budget, financed the lion's share of U.S. research and development. In 1980, however, industry surpassed the public sector. It has maintained that lead ever since, even during President Reagan's defense build-up. In 1991 (the latest year for which figures are available) American industry spent $78.1 billion on R&D, topping the $73.5 billion spent by all other sources, including the Federal Government.

R&D SPENDING: FEDERAL VERSUS PRIVATE
($ Billions)

Decade	Government	Private Industry	Difference
1961–70	$129.0	$ 72.7	+$56.3
1971–80	203.8	183.3	+ 20.5
1981–90	518.8	569.7	− 50.9

Source: National Science Foundation.

Even so, industrial-policy advocates claim that the persistent U.S. trade deficit justifies intervention. But a far better measure of our technological standing is the trade *surplus* we enjoy in high-tech goods. While the overall trade deficit went from $31 billion in 1980 to $129 billion in 1989, the high-tech balance held up well (dipping from $27 billion in 1980 to $16 billion in 1986, but rebounding to $27 billion in 1989). High-tech industries did have trouble competing when the U.S. dollar was high in the mid 1980s, but nothing like the troubles of other manufacturing industries.

The Clinton Administration seems to view projects like Sematech, the Texas-based semiconductor consortium, as a valid model for Detroit. Since 1987 Washington has spent $500 million of taxpayer funds to improve the manufacturing process for computer chips. Yet the resurgence of U.S. semiconductors, according to industry sources, is the work of small, entrepreneurial companies—ignored by Sematech—that developed an entirely new generation of computer chips. Sematech has taken credit for events largely beyond its control.

Over the last two decades, four other major federal efforts to promote commercial technology—the supersonic transport, the Clinch River Breeder reactor, the space shuttle, and Synfuels—proved economic failures. The key to avoiding the pitfalls of these past programs, according to the Administration, is to develop partnerships in which federal funds are matched by the private sector. This arrangement will allegedly enable market forces to guide federal funding. But when existing firms are *already* being subsidized by the government, the condition that private funds also be raised stacks the deck against new, innovative firms.

There are equitable alternatives to targeted subsidies. An expanded R&D tax credit could be made available to all U.S. companies that pay income taxes. More relevant for start-up companies are things such as access to bank loans, health-care costs, Americans with Disabilities Act regulations, litigation costs, and environmental legislation.

But the boondoggles, because they divert funds that might otherwise go to superior technologies, would be worse than doing nothing.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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community schools. You take that voucher and you talk to the principal and you say, 'Let's get some real education going here. Let's get back to some reading, writing, and 'rithmetic. Let's get rid of condom distribution. If you want to experiment, get yourself some volunteers. Don't use my children.'"

On school choice—and probably much else once we know one another better—conservatives should stand alongside men like Marvin Jackson.

2. Proposition 174 is a dagger pointed at the heart of the liberal teachers' unions—the most powerful political force in the modern Democratic Party. The teachers' lobby represented 40 per cent of the delegates needed for nomination at the 1992 Democratic convention. Coincidentally, 40 per cent of all urban public-school teachers send their children to private schools, according to Keith Geiger, president of the NEA. But his organization continues to do all it can to discourage others from exercising that same option.

If Proposition 174 passes, it will strike a crippling blow to the education establishment. Their fear is not that school choice will be tried and fail. It is that school choice will be tried and *succeed*.

3. Even if Proposition 174 loses, the school-choice movement will continue to grow. For one thing, the education establishment is intellectually bankrupt. So its spokesmen have become merchants of fear. In the increasingly shrill world of the National Education Association and the California Teachers Association, the suggestion that parents should be allowed to pick the schools their children attend raises the specter of "David Koresh High School," science courses in which kids learn how to make Molotov cocktails, witches' covens, etc., etc. Resorting to these tactics is a sign of desperation, from people unable to make intellectually compelling arguments.

Over the last 25 years, the education establishment has opposed every meaningful education reform that has been proposed. It is largely responsible for engineering the worst decline in the history of American education. And it is now in the (unenviable) position of defending one of the worst-performing education systems in the industrialized world. With such a record, popular insurgencies were sure to come. And come they have—in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Kansas, and Connecticut; in Milwaukee, Indianapolis, San Antonio, and Jersey City. More will follow.

But for now, the eyes of the nation are on California. It is as good a place as any to start a revolution in American education. —WILLIAM J. BENNETT

The Big Chill

In the House as Republican Leader,
Mr. Michel played sweet interceder,
    Which delighted the Speaker
    When confronting a squeaker,
But forget it with Newt the Impeder.

W. H. VON DREELE

Redoubled Standards?

FOR the very cynical, there was a pleasing irony in the possibility that Admiral Frank B. Kelso II might be dismissed as chief of naval operations for failing to ensure that the 1991 Tailhook convention was conducted like a university president's lawn party. For Admiral Kelso had been eager to bring the Navy into the age of feminism, pushing for women in combat ahead of the other services. So when Navy Secretary John Dalton recommended that Admiral Kelso be held responsible for Tailhook and executed, like Voltaire's admiral, *pour encourager les autres*, it would have been a case of Mensheviks falling to Bolsheviks. Justice and poetic justice are two different things, however. Defense Secretary Les Aspin was right to stop the hysterical inquisition from reaching its logical extreme, though his forbearance won't help the junior officers whose careers have been ruined.

There is another irony in Admiral Kelso's near-escape which is not pleasing at all: the very different attitude toward Attorney General Janet Reno and her conduct of the siege of David Koresh and the Branch Davidians at Waco. The Treasury Department has issued a damning indictment of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, which went ahead with the initial raid although it knew the element of surprise had been lost, then tried to cover up its ignorance and incompetence by falsifying its records and lying to investigators. This literally murderous abuse of the power of the state occurred before the Justice Department and the FBI got involved. But their behavior doesn't seem much better. Mr. Koresh claimed throughout the siege that he would surrender as soon as he had finished writing an interpretation of the seven seals in the Book of Revelation. A floppy disc found in the compound contains an almost-completed manuscript, an earnest albeit eccentric (to say the least) piece of work. Yet two experts called in to advise the FBI claim that the agents on the case consistently underestimated and dismissed the religious angle: one agent thought the seven seals were pinnipeds. Whatever the FBI thought of David Koresh, he was owed not a second attack, but an apology. Janet Reno and the FBI took the former route, and eighty people died.

Miss Reno won kudos for taking full responsibility in the aftermath. Will she hold to her word now?

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Probably not. She is a female, a civilian, and a true-blue liberal. Moreover, she was engaged in the honorable (to liberals) practice of policing people's lives—the very opposite of Admiral Kelso's alleged offense, which was a failure to do just that. The only thing she has going against her is that she's white. But we'll bet she wins this round, on points.

By a Side Door

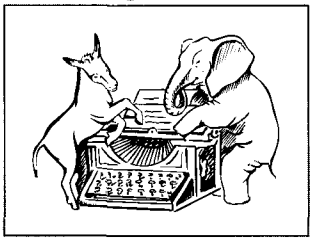
IF NAFTA OFFERS only modest direct economic advantages to the U.S., as we argued in our last issue, that makes the treaty's wider long-term implications so much the more important. What has emerged as central is whether Mr. Clinton's side agreements on environmental and labor laws transform NAFTA from a treaty liberalizing trade to one extending regulation.

And with good reason. Free trade is considered desirable by libertarians and conservatives precisely because it restrains the power of governments to increase the burdens of taxation and regulation. A country whose taxes and regulations are higher than average will find that its exports are priced out of world markets, its attractiveness to foreign investors is reduced, and its highest-earning citizens are tempted into tax exile. In effect, free trade creates a market in which governments have to compete for investors, high earners, and markets by offering them lower taxes and less costly regulations.

Governments don't like this. So they agree to impose the same taxes and regulations everywhere—or, at least, not to reduce them in order to attract investment or stimulate trade. They form, in fact, a

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

■ **Michigan:** With the sudden departure of Senator Don Riegle, Republicans eying the Michigan Senate seat can no longer aim their punch at his outdated liberalism and Keating Five membership.



The list of Democrats hoping for the nomination grows by the day. The strongest contender, however, is not yet on the list. Former Governor James Blanchard (defeated by John Engler in 1990) is being urged by party leaders and the wealthy labor unions to leave his ambassadorship in Canada to run for the seat. For now, he's happy up north.

There are two good Republicans to watch in the primary. Spencer Abraham ran the state GOP before Mr. Engler's election, then chaired the National Republican Congressional Committee. A principled conservative, he knows the ins and outs of campaigns. The party apparatus is behind him, and he has some $300,000 in hand.

Ronna Romney is a former national committeeman, head of various presidential commissions, and former daughter-in-law (now divorced) to former Governor George Romney. She hopes to capitalize on her popularity as a Detroit radio talk-show host. She argues that the state needs an outsider who shares the views of Ronald Reagan—she's pro-life, and she advocates lower taxes and a sweeping abolition of departments and agencies. She urges a rollback not only of Clintonism, but of Bush-era taxes and regulations as well.

Ronna Romney beats Spencer Abraham on charisma, but loses in party support, money, and experience. He looks likely to win, but with the National Republican Senatorial Committee talking up female candidates, she is someone to look out for.

■ **New Jersey:** Frank Lautenberg, like Bill Clinton, believes government is the solution to the nation's ills. Hence he votes for items such as Superfund, increased funding for Amtrak, more and more highway funds, mass-transportation projects, and more. In 1992 he had the most anti-Bush voting record in the Senate. But, fearful of the wrath of New Jersey's anti-tax brigade, he voted against Mr. Clinton's tax package.

Tom Kean, the closest thing to God for state Republicans, has decided not to run against him in 1994. Two candidates likely to enter the lists are Assembly leader Chuck Haytaian and two-term Representative Dick Zimmer. Mr. Haytaian is a strong fiscal conservative, but he has been criticized for not doing enough to unwind what Governor Florio has done to the state. However, he pushed for a middle-class tax cut last year (to no avail), and recently he admitted it was a mistake to roll back only the sales-tax increase, putting a hold on income-tax-rate reduction. In addition, he has been a vocal and persistent advocate (unlike many of his colleagues) of the Whitman tax-cut plan. Mr. Haytaian is pro-life.

Dick Zimmer, a state legislator for ten years until his House victory in 1990, had always been as active as they come in fighting for lower taxes and fiscal austerity. Yet he was among the large band of state Republicans who urged Mrs. Whitman to abandon her tax-cut plans. Mr. Zimmer is pro-choice.

It will clearly be a tough race. Money is a big factor: you must buy TV time in both New York and Philadelphia. Mr. Lautenberg spent $5 million of his own money to win in 1982, and he has plenty more. He has kept his nose clean, brought home the bacon, and voted against President Clinton's taxes.

If Republicans are ever to recapture the party from the Bush–Brady–Darman economic wing, they are going to have to put forward viable candidates who will fight on principle for the right ideas and not bow to pressure from campaign advisors.

—Geoffrey Morris

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cartel. In the European Community, this is called "harmonization"; in NAFTA it constitutes the side agreements. All free-traders agree, in theory, that this tax-and-regulation cartel is a very bad thing.

But not all agree in fact. The dispute between, say, the pro-NAFTA Heritage Foundation and the anti-NAFTA Competitive Enterprise Institute—free-traders both—revolves around how harmful the side agreements are. Do they have "teeth," i.e. enforcement mechanisms? Or are they for show, to persuade skeptical Democrats to climb aboard? Both sides score points because NAFTA is riddled with deliberate ambiguities. Article three of the side agreement, for instance, begins: "Recognizing the right of each party to establish its own levels of domestic environmental protection . . ." but goes on to insist that a signatory "shall ensure that its laws and regulations provide for high levels of environmental protection and shall strive to continue to improve those laws . . ." Indeed, the main agreement had already laid down that a signatory should not relax its regulations "as an encouragement for the establishment, acquisition, expansion, or retention in its territory of an investment or investor." And the sharpness of NAFTA's "teeth" is similarly open to dispute. There *are* mechanisms for enforcing the agreements; in the first instances, however, they are the domestic courts in each country.

But how comforting is that? It might persuade us that the side agreements, considered solely as a potential infringement of U.S. national sovereignty, are a modest threat we can risk. But if we see them as an engine of regulation, they seem much more ominous. Who, after all, will interpret the above ambiguities? U.S. trade bureaucrats? Mr. Kantor has already given his view that NAFTA means "no nation will lower labor or environmental standards, only raise them." The federal courts? But the fixed drift of federal judgments for three decades has been an "expansive" interpretation of regulation. Congress? The Administration? Federal agencies? But the "upward harmonization" of regulations, which is the principle underlying the side agreements, will give them the cover to do what they wish: namely to increase regulations here and, at the same time, to discourage people from escaping the burden by raising them elsewhere. Indeed, perhaps the worst danger is that if NAFTA goes through, it will become the model for future multilateral trade agreements. GATT, which until now has served to restrain regulatory protectionism, might then become a giant cartel of governments against investors, taxpayers, and new entrepreneurs.

In short, NAFTA's side agreements *do* threaten to transform trade policy into a mechanism for extending regulation—and those free-traders who dismiss this as a groundless fear need to study public-choice theory as well as the law of comparative advantage. But is this risk outweighed by political advantages, including the entrenchment of Mexico's prosperity? To that we will turn in our next issue.

See Your Book Seller

Blow eight bucks and take a look
At the Clintons' health-care book:
It's a horror not seen since
Frankenstein made flappers wince,
With more mandates mixed with bans
Than in Stalin's five-year plans,
Though the part on who's to pay
Would have made Rube Goldberg's day.

W. H. VON DREELE

Poor Numerology

THE U.S. Census Bureau has released its annual poverty report, claiming that 37 million Americans—14.5 per cent of the population—were "living in poverty" in 1992. Something odd, surely?

Census defines as "poor" any family which has an "income" below the official poverty threshold ($14,335 for a family of four in 1992). In 1992 federal, state, and local governments spent a record $306 billion on welfare programs for low-income Americans, more than three times the amount needed to lift all "poor" Americans above the poverty threshold. And yet official statistics show the percentage of Americans who are "poor" is now at the same level as when the War on Poverty started in the mid-1960s.

The conundrum occurs in part because Census omits most welfare when counting "incomes," missing large chunks of cash welfare and ignoring food, housing, and medical aid on principle. Also missing are tens of billions earned "off the books" to avoid onerous taxes and government regulation.

Thus we should not be surprised that the unpublicized Labor Department survey of household expenditures consistently shows that low-income people spend $1.85 for every $1.00 of income Census reports they have. When subsidized housing and health care are added, that $1.85 rises to $2.40.

The inaccuracy of the Census poverty report is no accident. As Heritage Foundation welfare analyst Robert Rector points out, the poverty report was created by the Johnson Administration as an advertising tool for the War on Poverty. It is designed to deliberately under-count incomes and exaggerate poverty in order to promote welfare spending.

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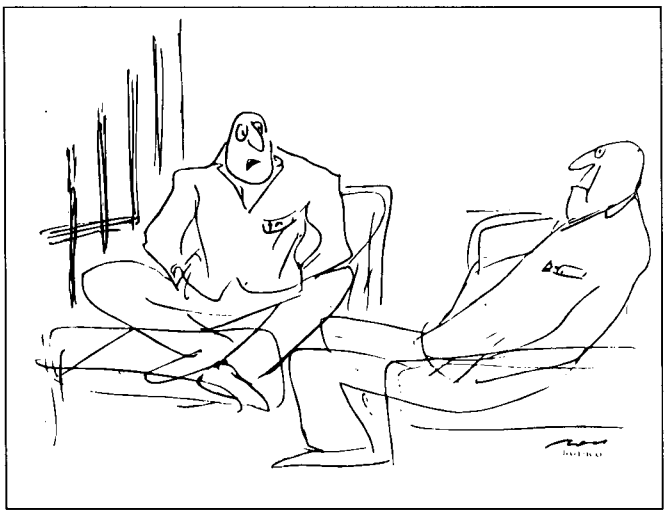

"I can tell you one thing, the truth sure as hell didn't set me free!"

With a mixture of fecklessness and catatonia, the Reagan and Bush Administrations presided over the Executive for 12 years without fixing the official poverty report. Then Bushies were shocked when liberals used the report to depict them as callous toward the poor. Republicans have never managed to be more than an apologetic tin can tied to the end of this process. But tell us something new.

Ideology or Competence?

TWO YEARS AGO, Republicans seemed destined to trample New Jersey Governor Jim Florio in the next election. Mr. Florio's taxing and spending had ruined the state's economy and outraged voters; the Republican response—promoting private-sector growth through tax cuts—would surely strike a chord with the electorate.

Yet, not until five weeks before election day did Republican candidate Christine Whitman start to make headway. After spending all summer courting liberals and feminists, attacking Mr. Florio's "right-wing" views on welfare, and trying to defend her wealth, she finally offered an across-the-board tax cut. She followed up the plan with an explanation that the tax cut would create new jobs, helping to invigorate the state's economy, eventually allowing it to keep pace with the rest of the nation.

Mrs. Whitman deserves credit for offering the proposal, at a time when many of her top advisors reject the idea of a tax cut. However, she had earlier stated, in response to a gambit from Governor Florio, that election-year tax cuts were a "cynical ploy," and the Florio campaign made the most of this in a devastating series of TV spots.

Since the plan's release, her poll standings have risen. But they have a long way to go. Garden State voters now think Mr. Florio is the *more* trustworthy of the two on the tax issue, and his approval rating has risen. The voters have just two weeks to remember their anger back in 1990 when the governor reneged on *his* promise of no new taxes.

The stakes are higher even than the prospect of four more years of Governor Florio. If Mrs. Whitman loses, the chattering classes will have been given the opportunity to ignore the incompetence of her campaign and instead draw the moral that running on tax cuts is a losing formula. It is not too late to save the day; but that will not be done by listening to the timid among her advisors.

James H. Doolittle, R I P

IT IS SWEET and proper (*dulce et decorum*) to recall that heroes have lived amongst us. The citation for one hero's Medal of Honor reads, in part,

> For conspicuous leadership above and beyond the call of duty, involving personal valor and intrepidity at an extreme hazard to life. With the apparent certainty of being forced to land in enemy territory or to perish at sea, General Doolittle personally led a squadron of Army bombers, manned by volunteer crews, in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland . . . April 18, 1942.

All the world knows about the Tokyo raid, but one recalls other facets of his scintillating career: brawling in Alaskan saloons before he was 12; a bachelor's degree in mining engineering from the University of California; regular army officer from 1917 on; pilot's wings in 1918; Distinguished Flying Cross for being the first to fly coast to coast in less than a day (1922); first American to fly across the Andes (in 1925, *sans* parachute); first pilot to fly an outside loop; first to make a flight entirely by instruments, including takeoff and landing (1929); major force in developing 100-octane aviation fuel; lifelong publicity man and later vice president and director of Shell Oil; winner of countless speed races and airmanship trophies; holder of master's and doctoral degrees in aeronautical engineering from MIT . . .

. . . and, starting when I was seven or eight, my great hero. Oh, how I loved that bludgeon-shaped "Gee Bee" in which he won the Thompson Trophy! And when I was nine and was reading out loud to my mother from a history of American aviation, I said, "Listen to this! It says, 'Great pilots like Rickenbacker in war and Doolittle in peace'!" Mother bridled instantly: "What do they mean? Your father does a very great deal in peace!" I had to straighten it out. Lucky the lad who has so many heroes!

Jimmy was one of the speakers at the memorial service for Dad, both in Miami and in New York. I remember asking him (as one pilot to another) how many flying hours he had, and was amazed to hear

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him say it was only about nine thousand. Why, junior pilots on Eastern had more hours than that! I asked him why. "Almost all of those hours are engineering test flights, you see. I might spend three weeks doing the engineering to prepare for a one-hour flight." Suddenly a new world opened to me.

Jimmy was calm, cheerful, dapper, and short, with the kind of shortness that transcends measure and flies above its assigned altitude. He exuded authority. No wonder that whole squadrons and divisions fell in behind him. And so now he has been cleared for the takeoff that has no landing on this earth, and we who will some day swing into line behind him will take off happily, exultantly.

—WILLIAM F. RICKENBACKER

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Bill:

I thought you might be interested in topics a TV viewer could hear described during four fairly typical days of television this summer.

Best regards,
Peter O'Donnell
New York, N.Y.

Geraldo
Mon.—Abusive husbands.
Tues.—Parents who run an escort service and their kids who help out.
Wed.—Fathers who steal their son's girlfriends.
Thurs.—"Child killing cults"—former Branch Davidians explain "the ritual child abuse and brain washing within the cult."

Donahue
Wed.—Virtual reality and sex.
Thurs.—California man who sued female boss for sexual harassment.

Jenny Jones
Mon.—A stepmother and stepson who want to get married, with father beamed in by satellite.
Tues.—Friends at war over the same man.
Wed.—Amy Fisher's alleged jailhouse lesbian lover, Amy's alleged heterosexual lover, and the author of *Lethal Lolita*.
Thurs.——Amy's alleged heterosexual lover returns for a one-on-one interview.

Oprah Winfrey
Mon.—An update on previous guests, including a mother who was upset that her four daughters were all gay and a couple accused of killing their children.
Tues.—A panel of men and women who have been stalked by obsessive ex-mates are joined by a stalker who explains his motivation.
Wed.—Women whose babies have been stolen to be sold.

Maury Povich
Mon.—Tom Arnold tells why he repressed memories of sexual abuse at the hands of his babysitter.
Tues.—An interview with Connie Chung and an update on a Dallas minister who was charged with the attempted murder of his wife. Guest was the minister's alleged mistress.

Jerry Springer
Mon.—Women who have affairs with relatives.
Tues.—A male prison inmate in the middle of a sex-change operation who wants to be put in a women's jail, and have the taxpayers pay for finishing his operation.
Thurs.—A white woman confronts her father, who tried to kill her husband because he is black.

Vicki
Wed.—Playboy Playmates from the last fifty years. Also, a Playmate lingerie and fashion show.
Thurs.—Four top male models give four audience members male makeovers.

A Current Affair
Mon.—A mom who wants to divorce her kids; update on the teenage driver who killed five Amish kids and why Tennessee lawmakers want to re-open the investigation of Elvis's death.
Tues.—Ex–Houston Oilers quarterback Dan Pastorini's ex-wife, who claims he is a deadbeat dad for not paying child support.
Wed.—A sex scandal at Northeast High in Pasadena, Maryland; and people who keep their marriages a secret so they can keep their health benefits.
Thurs.—A man who prowled through shopping malls using hidden video cameras to look up women's skirts.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Why do so many noted conservatives tend to be men of great girth? G. K. Chesterton, Whittaker Chambers, and Rush Limbaugh, for instance. I exclude you from this group, of course. Judging from photos (unretouched, I assume) your waistline hasn't changed in the last forty years.

Robert del Valle
Troy, Mich.

Dear Mr. del Valle: On the last point first, I singled out only last issue that my crowning biological fear is of a gestating paunch. But I'm working on it. If memory serves, most conservative seers have been pleasingly svelte. E.g., Plato, Aristotle, Mark, Matthew, John, Luke, Paul, and Reagan. Cordially,

—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

The Making of a Quagmire

BRIT HUME

Roberto Parada

WASHINGTON, D.C.

DURING the closing weeks of the Bush Administration, Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger quietly flew to New York to confer with UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali. Eagleburger had to make two trips before Boutros-Ghali got the message, which was that the 28,000 U.S. troops Mr. Bush was sending to Somalia would be there only as long as it took to get relief supplies flowing to starving Somalis. The Secretary General had a more ambitious mission in mind. He wanted the U.S., as one senior Bush aide recalls, "to stick around until the UN had the whole thing stabilized." Mr. Bush, however, was keen to have the U.S. forces out by inauguration day. While Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell had warned him that might be impossible, Mr. Bush was very clear about keeping the mission focused and brief. "The point is," said the Bush aide, "we knew what we were not going to do." As things have turned out, what the Bush Administration knew it was not going to do is precisely what the Clinton Administration was gradually lured into doing. It is what led to the disastrous October 3 raid in which 17 Americans were killed or fatally wounded and which turned public opinion against Mr. Clinton more emphatically than anything else in his Presidency.

It was typical of Mr. Bush that he had sent a broad force to accomplish a narrow mission in a short time. His experience under a series of Republican Presidents had left him with strong views about the use of military force. The central conviction of his Presidency was that American power was a force for good in the world and that a President should not shrink from applying it. However, Mr. Bush agreed with General Powell that the amount of force used should be not merely adequate, but overwhelming. That, he believed, made for short missions with success guaranteed and casualties minimized. It is a lesson that Mr. Clinton only now seems to be learning. The day after the debacle in Mogadishu, he said ruefully, "None of this happened when we had 28,000 people there."

Mr. Bush also believed in defining missions clearly, and narrowly. Nobody in the Bush Administration had forgotten the 1983 Marine-barracks bombing in Beirut, after which the Reagan Administration had difficulty explaining what the Marines had been doing there. Thus Mr. Bush's determination during the Gulf War to go only as far as the UN resolutions authorized. Mr. Bush had also tried to keep the focus of his earlier Panama invasion narrow, insisting that catching Manuel Noriega was secondary to liberating the country. But the Noriega manhunt turned out to be enough of a cliffhanger that Mr. Bush and General Powell considered it proof of the danger of having U.S. forces play sheriff, the very thing that Mr. Clinton's shrunken U.S. force in Somalia ended up doing in trying to capture the elusive General Aidid.

The failure to apply the military doctrines of his predecessor only partly explains how Mr. Clinton came to grief in Somalia. Equally important was his Administration's enchantment with the do-good potential of the United Nations. On May 5, Mr. Clinton held a White House welcome-home ceremony for U.S. forces who, the day before, had turned the Somalia operation over to UN command. In one of the most spectacular photo-ops of his Presidency, Mr. Clinton, surrounded by a large contingent of U.S. soldiers in their desert fatigues, walked the length of the South Lawn toward the waiting cameras and microphones. "You have proved again," he told the troops, "that our involvement in multilateral efforts need not be open-ended nor ill-defined, that we can go abroad and accomplish some distinct objectives and then come home again when the mission is accomplished." Mr. Bush could not have said it better. But Mr. Clinton also said, "One can now envision a day when Somalia will be reconstructed as a functioning civil society." That, of course, was the nation-building cause for which Mr. Boutros-Ghali had failed six months earlier to enlist the United States. Eventually he would succeed.

Mr. Bush had agreed to support the continuing UN mission with non-combat logistical and communications units and to keep a rapid-response combat unit offshore for a while as back-up protection for UN forces. In early June, the warlord Aidid launched a series of bloody attacks on UN forces, including the killing of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers. The Administration had thought that by this time the UN force totaling more than 20,000 troops would be able to handle Aidid and the other warlords. But, as one senior Clinton aide explained, "A number of the UN contingents were sort of hunkered down." The U.S. rapid-response force was soon deeply involved. "You had to use them," said the same official, "in order to get anything done." After the U.S. force led a

Mr. Hume is chief White House correspondent for ABC News.

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raid on Aidid's headquarters, Mr. Clinton, in his first prime-time news conference on June 17, announced proudly, "The military back of Aidid has been broken. A warrant has been issued for his arrest." Mr. Clinton said that if Aidid were caught, "The United Nations will have to determine what appropriate action to take." The U.S. not the UN, however, would lead the posse, and four hundred elite Army Rangers were dispatched to assist in the hunt.

Mr. Bush's humanitarian mission had been transformed, with little high-level discussion and almost no public debate. Indeed, inside the Clinton Administration the issue was handled by a sub-Cabinet group called the "Deputies' Committee." A senior Clinton official now acknowledges, "Hard questions were not asked." In late August, Defense Secretary Aspin took a stab at explaining the mission. The U.S., he said, would stay on until several things occurred: the violence was curbed, most of the warlords gave up their weapons, and the country had a police force able to keep order. This was a long way from the original mission, but, Mr. Aspin insisted, necessary to keep the country from backsliding into the chaos that produced the starvation in the first place.

By now, though, disillusionment with UN peacekeeping and "nation-building" had set in. In his speech to the UN General Assembly September 27, Mr. Clinton laid down four criteria he said should apply before the UN agreed to a peacekeeping mission: a clear threat to international peace, clear objectives, a clear end in sight, and clear knowledge of the cost. "If the American people are to say yes to UN peacekeeping," he said, "the UN must know when to say no." Asked afterward if the Somalia mission met the four criteria, a top White House official briefing reporters on background ducked the question. Finally he was asked if the criteria had been drafted with Somalia in mind. "Well," he said, "you try to learn from everything you do." Later that day, the President told reporters the UN would now shift its emphasis toward a political solution to the violence in Mogadishu. That, however, did not prevent the UN from involving the U.S. Army Rangers in the disastrous failed raid in Mogadishu only six days later. That left the Administration in a terrible muddle. An immediate pullout would have been the height of ignominy, especially with U.S. hostages being held. Indeed, Mr. Clinton thought it necessary to dispatch more troops and armor. But with the new emphasis supposedly on a political settlement, it wasn't clear what U.S. forces were supposed to do, beyond protecting one another. There was much talk of "de-personalizing" the conflict with Aidid, even of negotiating with him. Yet officials couldn't rule out another try to capture him. The policy appeared more confused than ever, and Mr. Clinton's protestations that all was well with relief operations throughout most of Somalia seemed only to underscore that the original mission had long since been accomplished. □

Back to Normal

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

TALLINN, ESTONIA

AFTER JFK or Moscow's Sheremetyevo, the airport in Tallinn is something of a shock. Passport inspection takes no more than a minute (visas are not required for an increasing number of Westerners), and customs is a quick walk-through. Taxis are plentiful, and the drive downtown is easy. In short, for the Western traveler all is normal—and that is just fine with the Estonians. Mart Laar, the cheery 33-year-old historian who is now this Baltic state's prime minister, explains, "We are trying to build a normal, open European society."

Pointing to the physical and psychological devastation left by fifty years of Soviet occupation, Laar warns that this will not be easy. "We didn't promise the very good life, the very big and quick success. . . . The only thing I promised was an enormous lot of work." Undaunted, Estonia is pressing on with radical free-market reforms. These are currently the work of the Center–Right coalition led by the Isamaa (Fatherland) Party, but most parties seem to support the free market. Socialism is widely seen as a failure, and disagreement mainly concerns the details and pace of reform.

The early fruits of these reforms can already be seen in Tallinn, Estonia's capital. Restaurants and bars abound, and, to those familiar with Moscow's chaotic sidewalk retailers, Tallinn's shops are impressive. Other private businesses are appearing, with success usually evidenced by sleek mobile phones and even sleeker receptionists. The streetcars wear Coca-Cola's colors and "*erootika*" has long since replaced *Pravda* on the newsstands. From grey concrete suburbs to grey plastic shoes the Soviet inheritance is still visible; but, overall, the visitor is left in little doubt that this is a city rapidly rejoining the European mainstream.

The consensus behind the economic reforms also reflects the current composition of the electorate. This is dominated by ethnic Estonians, despite the fact that today they account for only some 60 per cent of the population of 1.5 million. The preponderance of ethnic Estonian voters stems from the fact that the franchise at the time of the September 1992 elections was in effect restricted to citizens (and the descendants of citizens) of the independent, and largely homogeneous, Estonia annexed by the USSR in 1940.

This has led to an electorate inspired and brought together by a common culture and history. In particular this electorate remembers the independent Estonia that emerged from the ruins of the Russian Empire in 1918 after centuries in which the Estonians had been dominated by (as one Tallinn museum glumly concedes) "German, Danish, Swedish, and Russian conquerors."

The development of the Estonian republic was far from smooth, but, by the time of its reconquest by Moscow in 1940, Estonia's per-capita income was roughly on a par with that of Finland. This is essential to understanding the drive behind today's reforms. Things may be difficult today, but Estonians can at least look back and see that it is possible to build an independent and prosperous Estonia.

In the two years since regaining independence in August 1991, Estonia has made extraordinary progress to-

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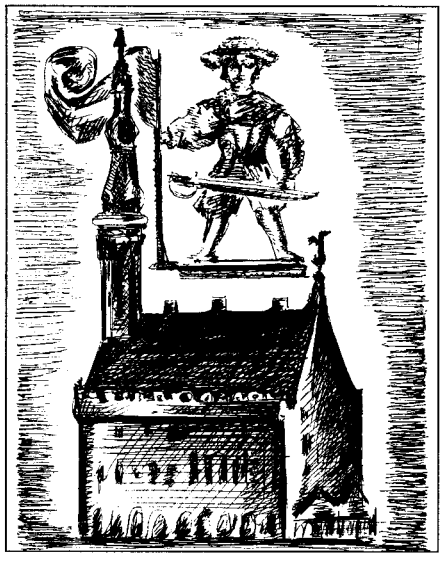
ward its goal of establishing a "normal" economy—despite suffering a (relatively modest) share of the post-Soviet disorder.

Most importantly, perhaps, in June 1992 Estonia replaced the ruble with its own currency—the kroon. The kroon was linked to the Deutschmark at a fixed rate of 8 to 1. Devaluation is prohibited by law. The kroon is fully backed by Estonia's hard currency and gold reserves. The Estonian Central Bank, Eesti Pank, may issue new kroons only in line with increases in these reserves. Eesti Pank is not allowed to lend to the government, nor may the government run a deficit. In 1992, a year of deep economic crisis, the government's budget surplus was equivalent to 1.7 per cent of GDP, an achievement beyond the ability of most Western governments. By June 1993 foreign-exchange reserves had tripled, and even an initially skeptical IMF was impressed.

A "normal" money is the first step to a "normal" economy, and the kroon is, in the words of Eesti Pank's governor, "good for anything, from the latest model of Western car to a call girl." The contrast with the recent past is striking. In the dying days of the ruble, inflation was running at an annual rate of over 1,000 per cent. There was rationing, and many products were unavailable for those without hard currency. Inflation is now 40 per cent, a very good level by Eastern European standards, and falling. Goods have reappeared in the shops and are available to all, foreign or local, although to the average Estonian they remain expensive.

To be sure, change has been far from painless. GDP has fallen by over 40 per cent since 1989, real disposable household income fell by more than 50 per cent in 1992 alone, and unemployment is many times higher than the official figure of 3 per cent. Estonians themselves, however, do not appear unduly downcast by this turn of events. Rather, they appear to relish their liberation from the lunatic Soviet economy. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the economy has bottomed out and that, particularly in Tallinn, the private sector is showing real growth, much of which is not reflected in the official statistics. This is almost certainly true of the service sector, while so far as manufacturing is concerned, it is interesting to note that energy consumption has fallen by far less than would be suggested by official figures of falling production. Equally, one small indicator of the real development of the Estonian economy may be found in the fact that, throughout Eastern Europe, only Hungary has, per capita, more cellular-telephone subscribers.

Times remain hard, notably for the heavily indebted state businesses, and maintaining a sound monetary policy has not been easy. Nevertheless, Eesti Pank's tough line has already survived a commercial-banking crisis. Despite pressure, the government appears to be adopting a similar approach to economic policy, resisting, so far as possible, a regime of bail-out and subsidy.



Luba Kolomytseva

Prime Minister Laar clearly rejects protectionism and, as Economy Minister Toomas Sildmae explains, with a well-educated work force and wage rates a tenth of those in Western Europe, Estonia wants trade, not aid. More generally, Sildmae sees his job as creating "the framework for the normal development of business" rather than managing that business. The hope is that the private sector will take up the slack left by the retreating state sector.

Privatization is obviously critical to this, but, as is typical in Eastern Europe, it has not been a smooth process. There are the usual allegations of corruption and "spontaneous privatization," although there seems far less evidence of this than elsewhere.

Attempts to provide restitution for former owners unlawfully expropriated in the 1940s have also led to delay. Mart Laar defends this in terms that would astonish the United States Congress. "Western countries have forgotten that the basis of their economic system is [private] property." Laar feels that it is impossible to have an effective free market without restoring the value of property. Therefore, he wants to show that it is possible to give property back to its rightful owners—even after fifty years. There is more to this policy, however, than the restoration of incentive. Put simply, it was made clear to me in a number of conversations with different officials that the government wants to return this property because, morally, it is the right thing to do.

Despite the delays and difficulties, much of small business is now in private hands. In the important agricultural sector, the collective farms have been broken up. Overall, Economy Minister Sildmae estimates that 40 per cent of industrial production is now outside the state sector.

The larger enterprises continue to be a major economic problem, however. Although a surprising number have been sold, and more will be, others are clearly doomed. There is a general view that many of these factories are "too big for Estonia." They were built to satisfy the needs of the now-collapsed Soviet command economy, and, in the words of one official, they "are not exactly world class." Perhaps most seriously, they are largely manned by imported Russian workers and thereby combine the Soviet period's disastrous economic and demographic legacies.

THE FIRST Estonian Republic was a consciously ethnic state, home for a small nation denied self-determination for nearly seven hundred years. This was reflected in the racial mix: ethnic Estonians made up some 90 per cent of the population. Today's figure of 60 per cent is a direct result of the Soviet annexation which led to massacre, deportation, and emigration, followed by a period of sustained Russian immigration.

There has been some Russian emigration over the past two years, but Estonians seem to recognize that there can never be a return to the old homogeneous republic. The new citizenship laws reflect this. In essence, most Russians will be eligible for permanent resident status. A substantial number

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are also immediately eligible for Estonian citizenship and many more will become so after a period of residence. Russians will enjoy full social rights, and there will continue to be access to Russian-language schools. Applicants for Estonian citizenship will have to pass a fairly basic language test; with little more than one million Estonian speakers worldwide, such a requirement is understandable.

Nevertheless, this has been a difficult period for Estonia's Russians, many of whom have lived there for decades. In the Soviet era there was no need to learn Estonian. Few Russians had any real consciousness that they were living in another country. Literally overnight this population found itself "abroad." Despite this, Mart Laar feels that ethnic relations are improving. "The hate that existed five years ago is gone."

Certainly this appears true in Tallinn, where Russians make up about 50 per cent of the population. Lenin Boulevard is no more, but Russian-language street signs remain unmolested. More of a problem are a number of towns close to the Russian border. Their inhabitants are predominantly Russian, moved there by Moscow to man the large factories that no one now wants. Narva, the largest of these towns, still displays a statue of Lenin and has politics to match. Poorly informed, somewhat apathetic, and with little visible economic future, the people there have proved relatively easy to manipulate by a Soviet-style leadership. It is primarily to this population that Laar is referring when he says, "The main problem that we have with the Russians is that they are not Russians. Most of them are not feeling themselves as Russians. They are feeling themselves as Soviets. . . . If they become Russian all the problems are solved."

Undoubtedly it is more complex than that, and it is surprising that more Estonians will not consider transferring Narva and its problems to Russia. Nevertheless there are signs of hope. There is certainly ethnic tension in Estonia, but it has led to less violence than in, say, Germany, where the standard of living is far higher and the immigrant population is comparatively small. Russian opinion also appears far from monolithic, not least, perhaps, because many Russians in Estonia are well aware that they are economically far better off than their counterparts in Russia itself.

Ethnic relations in Estonia are never going to be easy. To Estonians their Russian population will always be a living reminder of the Soviet occupation. Equally, transformation to minority status will be difficult for the once imperial Russians. Nevertheless, if Estonia is left to itself and its innovative economic policies succeed, there is a chance that a *modus vivendi* can be found.

The problem, as always in this part of the Baltic, is that Estonia may not be left to itself. Six thousand Russian troops remain there, including a sizable detachment in Tallinn itself. In increasingly threatening terms Moscow has made it clear that further withdrawals will be dependent on what it deems to be fair treatment of Estonia's Russian population. This is in line with a general shift on Russia's part toward greater assertiveness in protecting what it feels to be its interests in its "near abroad"—the republics of the former USSR.

Much of this is no more than saber rattling, reflecting an increasingly complex political situation in Moscow. Nevertheless, the continued presence of Russian troops only serves to polarize opinion in Estonia. Equally, threats of external intervention give nothing but encouragement to hardliners on both sides.

Even with its current problems Estonia is (as I was repeatedly told) no Yugoslavia, but, if Russia continues to meddle, that is what much of the Baltic region may become. □

Private Choice, Public Dumping

DANIEL McGROARTY

MILWAUKEE

FOR FOUR years, this Midwestern city has held the dubious honor of being ground zero in America's school-choice wars. The founders of Milwaukee's Parental Choice Program—polar political opposites Polly Williams, a black former welfare mother turned state representative, and Tommy Thompson, Wisconsin's staunch conservative governor—have fought battles with the state's education bureaucracy and teachers' unions in the legislature and the courts. Neither side is giving up.

In the meantime, the battleground is also a testing ground for competing predictions of how publicly funded, private-school choice programs will actually work. The findings are proving surprising. Take the "dumping" charge, the claim that parental choice will enable private schools to steal the cream of the public-school crop, leaving behind a caste of educational "untouchables."

Are Milwaukee's private schools stealing away the best and the brightest under choice? No. Even studies by an evaluator hand-picked by the adamantly anti-choice Herbert Grover, when he was Wisconsin's school superintendent, find that the average Parental Choice student is more likely to have been a disciplinary problem than a stand-out scholar at his old school—and was no better off educationally or financially than his old public-school peers.

But the dumping charge is not empty, just misdirected: problem students are being off-loaded—by the city's *public* schools.

While the Parental Choice Program gets all the ink, Milwaukee's public schools quietly run a larger private-school placement program, exiling more than a thousand students a year under a program called "Children at Risk." And they pay a premium—80 per cent of the state's share of the per-pupil cost of education, compared to 50 per cent for a Parental Choice voucher.

Some of these "at risk" students are two years or more behind grade level. Some have drug problems; some are violent; some are pregnant or teen parents. What they have in common is that they are kids in trouble, sent packing by the public schools.

Technically, parents must request that a child be classified "at risk," but those familiar with the program say it

Mr. McGroarty, a former deputy director of White House speechwriting, is a fellow at the Institute for Contemporary Studies.

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CHARLES MURRAY
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doesn't work that way. Schools confront parents of problem children with a forced choice. In some cases, it comes down to accepting an "at risk" assignment or expulsion.

By law, the "at risk" designation requires a finding that all public-school options have been exhausted. The difference between that and school choice is that bureaucrats—not parents—choose which students to move into private schools. And that makes all the difference in the world.

Obstacles in the way of Parental Choice pose no problem for Children at Risk. For example, opponents of Parental Choice have done everything in their power to raise the walls of church–state separation. Not only religious schools but even independent schools with a "pervasively religious" atmosphere have been barred from participating.

Consider the case of Messmer High school, the once-Catholic school that was closed down by Milwaukee's archdiocese almost a decade ago, then reopened by parents and community members under independent control. Messmer, which graduates 98 per cent of its poor and working-class students and sends 79 per cent on to college, has thrice been denied admission to the Parental Choice program. One can only marvel at the thoroughness of the Wisconsin education authorities' inquisition: the eight-page inspection checklist admonishes investigators to check trophy cases for Catholic Conference trophies and to count crucifixes in the classrooms. In February Brother Bob Smith, a black Capuchin monk and former parole officer who serves as Messmer's principal, endured seven hours of interrogation by state education authorities in his effort to gain entrance to the choice program. Nonetheless, in late May, the authorities ruled the school "pervasively religious" and barred it from Parental Choice. For the record, Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction noted that the "C" in WCIAA—on the 1966 boys' basketball trophy—stands for *Catholic*.

Now, compare Messmer to Milwaukee Spectrum, one of several dozen schools doing heroic work with Children at Risk. Spectrum enrolls 65 pregnant teens, some carrying their second child. Spectrum, like Messmer, is not run by the Catholic archdiocese; its buildings and grounds were purchased for one dollar from the parish next door. There are a whole range of connections between school and church: the parish still uses Spectrum's cafeteria as a meeting hall, Spectrum's employees are eligible for coverage under the archdiocese's health insurance, and the school's assistant principal is a sister of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Girls who graduate from Spectrum receive a diploma signed not only by the school's principal, Steve O'Connell, but also by the principal of St. Joan Antida, a parochial school in the city.

Mr. O'Connell points out with mock admiration the way architects were able to disguise a cross built into the school's brick façade by building air conditioning exhaust vents into its arms. But not all outward signs of the school's religious past have been expunged. While it does not appear in the sketches of the school featured on Spectrum's promotional literature, the heavy stone cross that crowns the school still stands over the entrance.

Public-school authorities did not subject Spectrum to anything resembling Messmer's nightmare. O'Connell never received any visits by state officials to assess excessive entanglement between church and state. In the rush to off-load problem students, questions about crosses, nuns, and Catholic landlords never came up.

The question goes beyond whether Children at Risk works. While the program recently received a scathing review from an outside evaluator, in places like Spectrum it does. Steve O'Connell is proud of the fact that while some of his students live in their cars after being kicked out of home, 4 of last year's 19 graduates went on to college. But parents are entitled to ask: If private schools are good enough for problem kids, then what about poor ones? What about my kids? What matters in Milwaukee, apparently, is not whether private-school choice exists but who does the choosing—parents or bureaucrats.

It's a strange message. Parental Choice doesn't have enough seats for the students who want in—and schools like Messmer that would welcome choice students cannot get into the program. On the other hand, get high, get pregnant, or pose a violent threat to those around you, and the public schools will be happy to pay your private-school tuition—even if the school has a cross on its front lawn. □

Ideas or Consequences?

RICHARD BROOKHISER

NEW YORK

AS THE New York mayor's race runs to its finish, local conservatives face a question: Is a vote for George Marlin a vote for David Dinkins, or is a vote for Rudy Giuliani a vote for David Dinkins in white-face? Given the political complexion of the locality, the number of people pondering this issue is small. But it may be enough to tip a tight election. Hence the intensity the question provokes.

"In Morrisania in the Bronx, a guy got so heated he was about to throw a punch at me," says Herb London, Conservative Party candidate for governor in 1990, describing the perils of campaigning for Marlin, the Conservative Party candidate for mayor now. "He said, 'I've seen the value of my house go down 50 per cent in four years. I don't have the luxury of voting for Marlin. My life is on the line.' "

"It took a long time" for New York City "to get into this mess," replies Mike Long, Chairman of the State Conservative Party. "It's going to take a long time to get out."

The present incarnation of the mess is Mayor Dinkins. When I first met him up close, on a TV sound stage, he did two things that epitomized the bad in his administration. For his mike test, he recited the first stanza of W. E. Henley's "Invictus": "Out of the night that covers me, / Black as the Pit from pole to pole, / I thank whatever gods may be / For my unconquerable soul." As he left, he felt the nap of my jacket, and praised the material. There in one glimpse were the self-dramatizing self-pity, and the attitude

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR *senior editor, is a columnist for the* New York Observer.

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Maybe Clinton should read his mail from time to time.

It might help!

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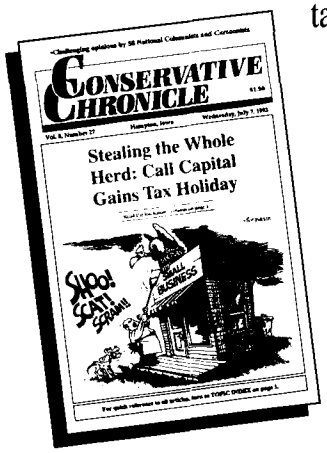

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of "Don't bother me, I'd rather be changing clothes" that New Yorkers have come to know so well.

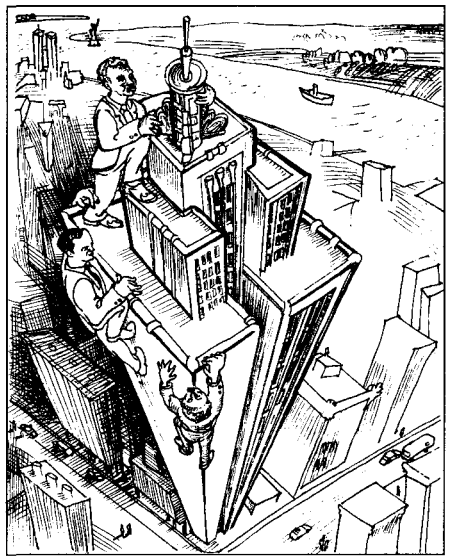
If only that had been the extent of it. But there was more. Dinkins is wedded to zero-sum economics, wherein the only way to raise revenue is by raising taxes, fees, or fines. He has been almost equally incapable of visualizing the increases in productivity and budgetary flexibility to be gained from restructuring city government. Worst of all has been his record on race. White liberals who voted for Dinkins as a "healer" discovered that he understood healing to mean never looking cross-eyed at rabble-rousers of color. New York was spared a Rodney King riot, for which Dinkins can take some credit. In its place, the city had a boycott of Korean fruit stands, a riot of Hispanic drug dealers, and the one fatal mob attack on a Jew in the Western world since the Forties.

Rudolph Giuliani, the man Dinkins beat by less than two percentage points in 1989, has spent the last four years awaiting the re-match. Recent polls show him running within the margin of error. If he wins, the two largest cities in America will have Republican mayors.

The Conservative Party did not want him to succeed, for a variety of reasons. Some were political. Giuliani schemed for the Conservative nomination, but would not seek it publicly, though he sought, and got, the nomination of the Liberal Party. His mentor in the GOP is State Senator Roy Goodman, a member in good standing of a Republican establishment in Albany that is too tight with the Democrats. The Conservative Party also distrusted Giuliani ideologically, and personally. In the 1989 race, he flipped on abortion, from semi-anti- to pro-. Last year, though Giuliani allies on the School Board opposed the Rainbow Curriculum, he took no strong public stand himself. This year, he marched in both the Gay Pride Parade and the St. Patrick's Day Parade, swinging both ways in the culture war. In June, he switched positions on luxury rent-control, from being against to lobbying in Albany for its continuation.

The Conservative Party kamikaze against him is George Marlin. On paper, and with the press, Marlin has been a good candidate. He has spent 16 years in municipal finance, and has written a book on the subject. "I would not go to Albany to whine for more money," Marlin says, "because I know it's not there. I would ask for the tools to change the system." He lives in Ridgewood, Queens, in District 24, and Mary Cummins, the woman who slew the Rainbow Curriculum, supports him. He is, as Mario Cuomo told the *New York Observer*, "bright, cogent, quick, amusing," and despite Cuomo's saying so, it is true.

Perhaps the best thing about the Marlin campaign has been his avoidance of what *The New York Times Magazine* called the "race race." The *Times* hurled the phrase at Giuliani, but the master practitioner in this election has been Dinkins, who is running a classic good cop/bad cop scam. Every month, some Dinkins supporter



Stephen Moros

says that voting for Giuliani "gives power" to KKK types, or that Giuliani is surrounded by "fascistic" elements, or that if Herman Badillo, a Giuliani ally, really cared about Puerto Ricans, he would have married one (Mrs. Badillo is Jewish). With each squawk, Dinkins thanks God that he is not as other men, even as these publicans. When the racist-baiting is more subtle, Dinkins welcomes it, as when President Clinton announced that he would never accuse those voting against the mayor of "*overt* racism." Giuliani's most controversial contribution to the race race was when he called the Crown Heights riot a pogrom, provoking learned discussions of whether pogroms required state sponsorship. More insidious has been the cold-bloodedness with which he collects the endorsements of Hispanics, as if he were a longshoreman unloading a shipment of bananas. Marlin, blessedly, talks issues.

He also collects endorsements, most of them, however, from out of town. William Bennett flew in to boost Marlin, citing his support for school vouchers. Jack Kemp, Bennett's partner in Empower America, had come in earlier to empower Giuliani. Marlin "is terrific," says Kemp. "I like him. But he's a spoiler. He's in it for ideas."

Under normal circumstances, conservatives like nothing better than incinerating themselves on a pyre of ideas. But the loathing directed at David Dinkins has blunted Marlin's appeal. Giuliani supporters make three pitches to the Right. The weakest is that their man has to lean left to win. "In his heart of hearts, I don't think Rudy is extremely conservative," admits Charles Millard, a liberal Republican city councilman. "But he's trying to get elected in a very liberal city." A better argument is that Giuliani is better than he was four years ago. His economic plan calls for local tax cuts to stimulate the economy, and he has attacked "the disorder that is driving the city down"—not crime, but chaos and filth. By doing the latter, argues Richard Vigilante in *New York Newsday*, Giuliani "put himself on the right side of the war between the people who govern the city and the people who live in it." The direst argument is that, while Giuliani isn't the best hope, he's the last. "Four years from now the city may be irredeemable," says Fred Siegel, professor of history at Cooper Union. Another Detroit? "No, never. But we could be another Philadelphia."

Small as it is, the Right in New York is split three ways: the policy wonks, grateful that Giuliani is paying attention to them; the movement die-hards, who don't believe his attention is worth the vapor it's printed on; and the larger mass of conservatively inclined voters, who are scared to death of four more years of malaise and polarization. Marlin has been running at two percentage points in the polls, and his chances of getting a respectable protest vote depend on his performance in debate. But Giuliani, who is no fool, has refused to debate with him. If necessary, Marlin hopes to debate Dinkins and an empty chair. An empty chair, and an empty suit of excellent cut—one of which will be the next mayor of New York. □

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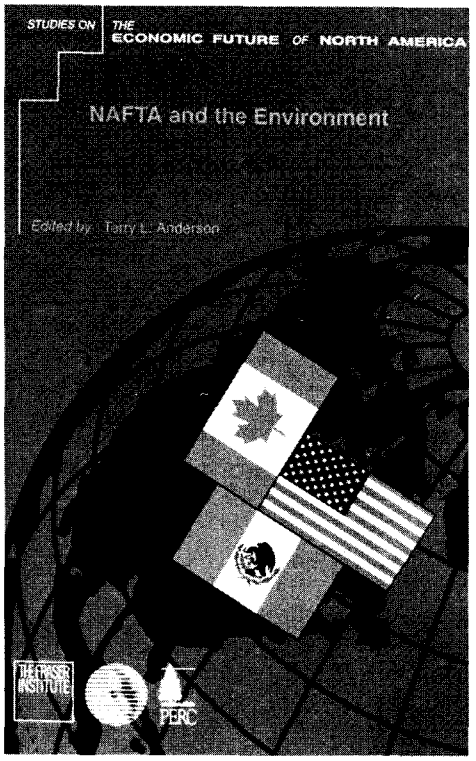
Some Myths and Facts about NAFTA and the Environment


STUDIES ON THE ECONOMIC FUTURE OF NORTH AMERICA
NAFTA and the Environment
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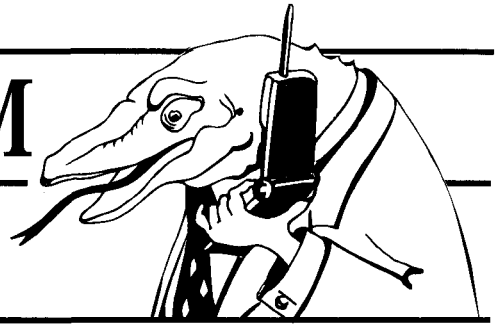

■ So you want to make a billion without actually cheating? The first lesson is: It can't be done except by inheritance, or by really hard work, which I assume you're not interested in (I certainly wasn't), or by sheer genius, which may not be available on demand, even to the readers of *NR*.

The second lesson is: Don't lose money unnecessarily. Last year, Richard Branson of Virgin Atlantic told me the best way to turn a billion bucks into a cool million: "Buy an airline." But Richard has turned his company around. To lose money in the Clinton era, buy a drug company.

But maybe you want respectable evidence. My researchers just dug up a report by Robert Goldberg for the Institute for Policy Innovation, a Texas outfit. Goldberg says pharmaceutical stocks have dropped $90 billion in value in the last year; in the first three quarters of this year, biotech stocks plummeted 30 per cent—in an overall bullish market.

What's killing the market? Three words: government price controls. "The [mere] threat of price controls," says Henry Temeer, chairman of Genzyme, "has done more damage to the biotechnology industry than anything else that has happened in the industry's history. Proponents of government controls don't know what it takes to attract a hundred-million-dollar investment for projects that won't show a profit for at least ten years."

But neither President nor Mrs. Clinton will stop trashing drug firms. In February Bill was screaming about "unconscionable" price hikes and demanding voluntary price restraints; a month later Hillary lashed out at vaccine manufacturers for "shameless profiteering." Last month the industry got what it feared: the "reform plan" includes a "drug price review board" and a "Breakthrough Drug Committee" to calculate "reasonable" prices for new life-saving drugs and vaccines.

The idea is that the drug firms lack "public spirit." Really? In August, while the Clintons were "serving the public" by making speeches, leading U.S. drug companies announced major advances toward cures for Alzheimer's and cystic fibrosis. Betaseron, an FDA-approved wonder drug which promises to reduce the effects of multiple sclerosis by a third, hit the market in September. The new drug can't be produced fast enough to satisfy the demand. It costs two hundred bucks to immunize a kid against polio, smallpox, TB, and a dozen other once-fatal or -crippling diseases—the best bargain in history. Forget "public-spiritedness": who's serving the public?

Even Yale Law grads should see that imposing price controls on new drugs means fewer new drugs. From 1975 to 1990, U.S. firms like Eli Lilly, Merck, and Pfizer put fifty new world-class drugs on the market—five times as many as Germany, three times as many as England, ten times as many as Japan. In Germany and the UK price restraints lowered drug and vaccine prices but left R&D virtually dormant. Some of the biggest British drug companies, including Glaxo and SmithKline Beecham, moved major facilities to the United States. Now, Goldberg points out, Viagene, which had been developing an AIDS vaccine, has canceled a $25-million stock offering (intended to raise research dough) because of "fears about price controls." Several of the largest U.S. drug companies announced recently that they have cut or plan to cut R&D efforts for childhood vaccines. Thank you, Hillary.

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"The people elected us. Let them take the blame!"

■ A new survey released by the National Federation of Independent Business reveals that small-business confidence in the economy "plunged to a twenty-year low" in September. The little guys are more pessimistic than they were under Bush, during the 1981–82 recession, and through the whole Carter era. Why? More than three out of four "disapprove" of Clinton's economic policies. And this was two weeks *before* Hillary unveiled her hostile takeover of the health-care industry. They say the Democrats love jobs but hate employers. Guess the feeling is now mutual.

■ The whole world, including the U.S. Congress, the SEC, the news pages of the *Wall Street Journal*, and all the respectable brokers, encouraged me to sell my junk-bond portfolio. Naturally, I bought. That was in 1990, after Drexel Burnham Lambert was put to sleep by federal regulators. The gurus figured the high-yield market was a "Ponzi scheme" propped up by Michael and his stable of fast-talking hucksters. The smart money knew better. Paine Webber snapped up Richard Hochman, a senior Drexel banker, along with 10 to 15 not-so-senior Drexel bankers. Drexel's president, Fred Joseph, joined a new firm, Brenner Securities, while the former head of Mergers & Acquisitions, Leon Black, started his own firm, Apollo Partners. And those guys are making *gazillions*! The market for "junk" has never been larger, with $38 billion of new bonds issued last year—and another $40 billion through October 8 this year. And investors who were "rash" enough to buy and hold junk bonds made out better than those sweet patriotic souls who bought Treasury bonds of similar maturities. And would you believe it, the respectable money is now going into health-care stocks. —GEKKO

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ON BOOKS AND BUCKLEY

- ***The New York Times Book Review*** (on *Atlantic High*): "Mr. Buckley is great fun to be with. Endlessly entertaining, gabby, opinionated, witty, sentimental, amusing, warm, and knowledgeable."
- **Norman Mailer**: "No other actor on earth can project simultaneous hints that he is in the act of playing Commodore of the Yacht Club, Joseph Goebbels, Robert Mitchum, Maverick, Savanarola, the nice prep school kid next door, and the snows of yesteryear."
- **Ronald Reagan**: "When Bill Buckley slows down, it is to a speed that leaves others in the dust..."
- **Charlton Heston**: "He's run a magazine and for mayor, written novels and commentary, played the harpsichord and Moses to modern conservatism, while keeping a proper perspective between God and country, friends and family."
- **George McGovern** (on *Racing Through Paradise*): "A delight...for me, the best of his writings. How can he be so clear and compelling on sailing and so confused on politics?"
- ***Chicago Sun Times***: "A first-class writer who brings class to the genre."
- ***St. Louis Post-Dispatch***: "As always, Buckley's erudition and humor shine through."
- ***San Diego Union***: "Subtleties and acuteness of observation and authority and wit."
- ***Chicago Tribune*** (on *Stained Glass*): "Intelligent, urbane, and witty."
- **John Kenneth Galbraith**: "Mr. Buckley should give up politics and concentrate on writing."
- ***The New York Times***: "There's a lightness of touch and a facileness of invention that suggests that even if he is dead serious...he is having nothing but fun in putting his ingredients together."
- **Murry Kempton**: "Buckley tempts you to remember Macaulay's grudging compliment to Burke, which was that he generally chose his side like a fanatic and defended it like a philosopher."
- **Publishers Weekly** (on *Right Reason*): "Buckley is at his brilliant, biting best in this latest collection of his political pieces from *National Review* and elsewhere..."
- ***Washington Times***: "Mr. Buckley's thrice-weekly columns...are marvels of a mind at work."
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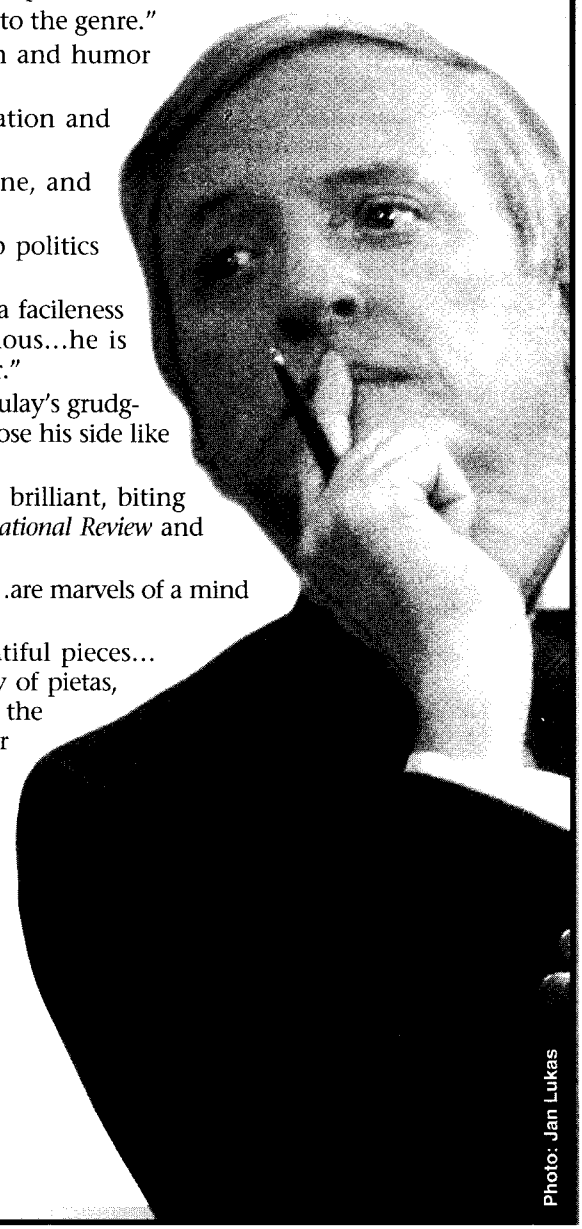

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Mr. Clinton's Trojan Hearse

IN IT FOR HIS HEALTH?

Judged by the likelihood that it will improve the nation's health care, the Clinton plan looks like a disaster. But perhaps the President is judging by other standards.

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S health-care reform program has been discussed in Congress and the media as if it were a program to reform health care. That is not wholly unreasonable. It will, indeed, change the American health-care system. But as Roscoe Conkling remarked: "When Doctor Johnson described patriotism as the last refuge of a scoundrel, he was unaware of the then unexploited possibilities of the word 'reform.'" And, true to scoundrelly form, Mr. Clinton's program is less a health reform than a political strategy: a strategy outlined with beguiling frankness by the President's pollster, Stanley Greenberg, in articles published in *The American Prospect* in 1990 and 1991.

Mr. Greenberg sought to dispel the pessimism then current about the future of the Democratic Party. It was seen as virtually unelectable, having lost traditional supporters to the Republicans over taxation, affirmative action, welfare spending, and traditional values. Supposedly, it could not abandon its positions without alienating its shrunken but vital base; and it could not win back the lost tribe of Reagan Democrats if it held onto them. To disprove this, Mr. Greenberg outlined a political strategy for a Democratic victory which I break down into the following five steps:

1. His starting point was the need to discredit the Reagan–Bush years. This meant emphasizing the deficit above all else, attributing Eighties prosperity to credit that would now have to be paid off, claiming that the benefits of tax cuts had gone exclusively to the rich, and deriding the new jobs created as ill-paid service-industry "McJobs." Not an easy task, but the political stakes were enormous. As Mr. Greenberg wrote: "The battle to define the Reagan–Bush years is a critical political arena where Democrats have the opportunity to disrupt the Republicans' hold on the middle class, contest again the issue of prosperity . . ."

President Clinton won that battle—and with the assistance of more than Mr. Greenberg. President Bush's aides tacitly endorsed the attacks on Reagan in order to make themselves look good by comparison. On one occasion OMB Director Richard Darman referred in congressional testimony to "the Carter–Reagan recession." Such thinking was a perfect example of "short-termism" or even "now-nowism." It neglected the obvious problem that Mr. Bush as Vice President was perhaps the single greatest beneficiary of the Reagan years, Michael Milken not excepted. If the Eighties were discredited, he would be fatally damaged—and indeed he was eventually defeated as the champion of an era that never really existed, "the Reagan–Bush years."

2. Mr. Greenberg's second theme was the recovery of America's economic strength by "investment." This was not, however, investment as Wall Street understands it, but a respectable New Democrat disguise for the traditional liberal Democratic prescription of taxing and spending. Investment of this kind covered "a more expansive role for government," taxing "excessive luxury consumption, rewarding productive private investment, and emphasizing investment in decisions about public spending" and, of course, "social spending."

3. The third theme was hostility to the wealthy because they fail to pay their fair share of taxes. Mr. Greenberg saw here a way to divide the coalition, assembled by the Republicans, between the wealthy and the broad middle class on "no new taxes." His argument was assisted by the 1990 budget deal which destroyed the GOP's reputation as the defender of the middle class against taxation. If taxes were going up anyway, why shouldn't the rich pick up the tab?

4. But dividing the middle class from the GOP was only half the solution. There was still the problem of getting the middle class to identify with Democrats. Mr. Greenberg's fourth theme made a start: emphasize the "work ethic," strong families and personal responsibil-

Mr. O'Sullivan is NR*'s editor.*

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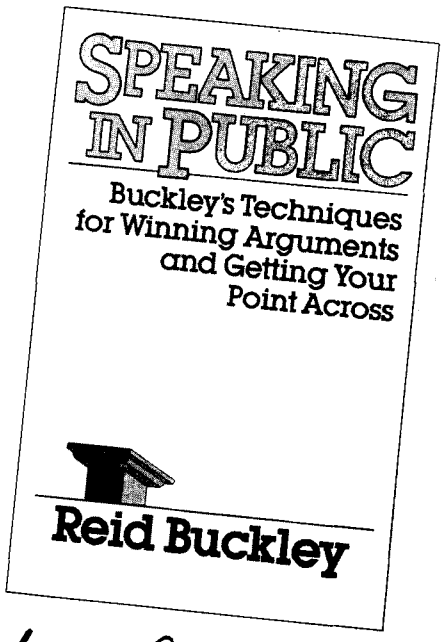

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ity. What he boldly called "the new class politics" required Democrats at least to talk about welfare reform.

5. But although these themes might break up the Republican coalition and begin the Democrats' wooing of the middle class, they would not be enough to forge an *enduring* Democratic majority. That required the fifth theme: "Democrats need to rediscover broad-based social policy that sends a larger message: Democrats are for 'everybody,' not just the 'have-nots.' That means defending and enlarging social-insurance initiatives that reach the lower and middle classes rather than constructing safety nets that protect only the poor."

For social programs that reach beyond the poor encourage more and more people to become dependent upon the government. Voters gradually become partisans of the programs from which they benefit visibly but which they finance invisibly through general taxation or employer mandates—partisans too of the political party that seems most committed to keeping and expanding such programs. As the British Tory intellectual

(and onetime minister for health), Enoch Powell, pointed out some years ago: "In the welfare state, it is more blessed not to take away than to give."

Yet the financial consequences of broad-based social-spending programs are horrendous. As John Attarian demonstrated in a recent NATIONAL REVIEW, major entitlements—i.e., Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—have risen relentlessly from 25 per cent of the federal budget in 1965 to about half today. As a percentage of GDP, their rise is almost as spectacular: from 4.5 in 1965 to 11.2 last year. And as baby-boomers retire in 2010–2030, the number of workers supporting each beneficiary will fall, for instance from 3.3 in 1991 to about 2 by 2035 for Social Security.

Can President Clinton square the circle? Can he have the *political* benefits of broad-based social entitlements without the *fiscal* disaster they apparently threaten? An impossibility? A logical contradiction? Perhaps not. For transfer payments like Social Security, two patches are available. The first is modest limitation of benefits, for instance raising the age of retirement by a few years. The second patch is more ingenious: it is to "claw back" the universal benefits from higher-income beneficiaries through the tax system. Indeed, Mr. Clinton started on this in his budget by raising the proportion of Social Security benefits subject to income tax.

Managing the Class War

SUCH an approach might in theory pay political dividends. The broad-based system would continue to unite the middle class and the poor—while higher taxation on "the rich" (as defined by the Treasury) sustained class-war politics. But the margin of advantage is very narrow. If benefits are extended to more people, as political logic dictates, or if the ratio of taxpayers to beneficiaries changes unfavorably, as is actually happening, then taxation has to bite ever deeper into moderate incomes. And that revives taxation as a Republican issue. So Mr. Clinton's politics of dependency has limited reach while confined to transfer payments. But might it not be possible to have the best of both worlds in a social *service* that combines broad-based coverage with cost control—a new universal health plan, for instance?

The classic example of such a paradox, after all, is the British National Health Service—possibly the only popular socialist institution in the world. Admittedly the NHS has all sorts of problems, for instance long waiting lists for non-urgent operations. But these are blamed not on the NHS itself; nor on the truth that a system which encourages unlimited demand for limited resources must rely on rationing, however disguised; but on the government for not spending enough. And though Labor as well as Tory governments endure this criticism between elections, the NHS benefits the Left at elections because Labour is more trusted to defend it—just as in the U.S. the Democrats gain as the friends of Social Security. And these political dividends are achieved by a program costing less than 7 per cent of GDP.

Mr. Clinton seems to have calculated that he can achieve the same thing here. His health-care reform has several points of resemblance to the British system as amended by the "Thatcher reforms." Both are built around a distinction between providers and purchasers in a regulated "internal market"—with patients collectively represented by Health Purchasing Alliances in the U.S. and by District Health Authorities in the UK. In both, health expenditure is to be confined within a global budget. And both employ direct price controls.

In short, both are hybrids of market competition and government control. But there is one great difference. The British reforms—the purchaser–provider distinction, self-governing hospitals, money following the patient, and independent doctors competing with the pur-

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Q: How did you go about investigating (Arthur) Schlesinger's research?

A: I took The Crisis of the Old Order and went through the Coolidge section line by line. I delved into the historical sources to see how Schlesinger's writing squared with the relevant historical documents. What I discovered was that Schlesinger's treatment was almost a complete caricature from beginning to end. Almost every sentence on Coolidge was questionable. I concluded that almost every sentence involved the deliberate or unconscious distortion of the historical record.

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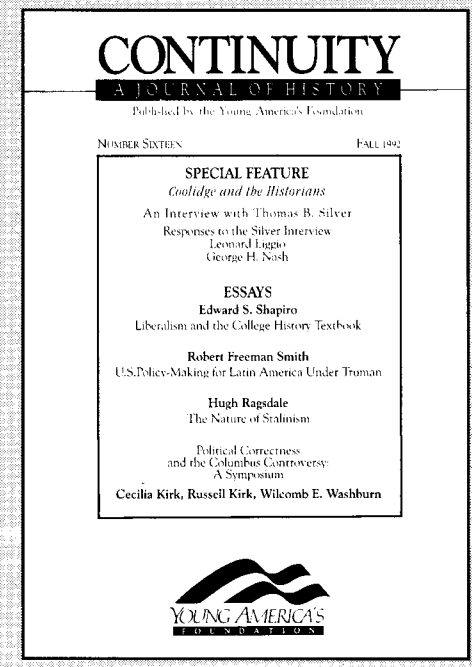

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chasing authorities—were an attempt to introduce some competition, flexibility, and innovation into a rigid structure of bureaucratic administration. The global budget and price controls are the relics of the previous non-market bureaucratic system.

Exactly the opposite is true of the Clinton plan. Here it is the global budget and disguised price controls (i.e., premium caps and regulated physician fees) which are the innovations, extending administrative control into an (admittedly distorted) market.

How is the U.S. hybrid likely to work in practice? For instance, one of the basic elements in managed competition is a comprehensive health-care package—in plain English, a basic package—which would be available from every insurer, eligible for tax relief, and crafted by a National Health Board. This would, of course, be a political body quite as subject to political pressure as Congress or state legislatures. If the experience of mandated health benefits at state levels is any guide, every specialty would lobby to be included in the package—and with a chance of success. So the basic package would be a generous and expanding one. Then again, one of our present problems is that patients pay too little of their medical expenses out of pocket—partly because most plans have a low deductible. But does anyone see the political process setting a high deductible in the minimum package? It would be as unpopular as cutting Social Security COLAs.

Both mandated benefits and low deductibles will likely boost medical costs. Such pressures might in theory be offset by bargaining between the Health Purchasing Alliances and health providers. But that can only do so much. And downward pressure on prices will be further undermined if the health-purchasing cooperatives—the organizations "managing" the competition—turn into what Senator Kassebaum has called "little HCFAs," over-regulating the health-insurance market, instituting an oligopoly of HMOs and insurance companies, keeping out innovative competitors, and generally strangling competition in bureaucracy.

Hence the second element: a global budget for health care. This is modeled on the apparent success of the British NHS in holding down health care's share of GNP. Indeed, it is more ambitious, seeking to contain *all* health spending, not just the public sector's.

What it ignores is that the apparent British success was achieved by quite drastic measures. During the 1950s, the NHS lived off the capital of private and charitable hospital provision. The first hospital-building program was launched in 1962—14 years after the NHS was established. To a lesser extent, this sacrifice of capital to current expenditure occurred through the 1970s. Medical technology, some invented in Britain, was available there later and in less quantity than abroad, e.g., CAT scanners and kidney-dialysis machines.

Secondly, only half of 1 per cent of Britain's GNP is spent on private health care, compared to 2 to 3 per cent in France and Germany. As a near-monopoly purchaser of medical services, the NHS could and did hold doctors' pay well below the international average.

Thirdly, control of spending is reflected in rationing—in waiting lists for some treatments. When limited resources meet infinite demand, they are absorbed either in curing everyday ailments like the common cold or in dealing with the most urgent needs, such as a near-fatal heart attack. But people wait weeks, months, and in some cases even years for hip replacements, operations for varicose veins, and so on.

These budgetary decisions are not, however, published as explicit priorities. Some mean longer journeys for expensive treatments. Some close wards temporarily when the budget runs out. Some are communicated to the patient by his doctor's telling him that "nothing can be done"—perhaps because the District Health Authority has decided that patients of a certain age will not receive certain treatments. Such covert rationing would be culturally unacceptable and legally questionable in the U.S. even in the public sector. (Indeed, it is increasingly ineffective in Britain, where health spending has begun to rise sharply.) And since Mr. Clinton's global budget covers all health spending, rationing could not be hidden in clinical decisions. Some bureaucrat would have to instruct private physicians to cease giving care when the budget ran out. So a global budget would either become a device for *explicit* rationing, or be ignored in practice, or be challenged in the courts, or—most likely—all three in quick succession.

Hence the resort to specific price controls such as insurance premium caps or limits on physician fees. But simultaneously controlling prices and increasing demand (by enrolling 37 million new people in health plans with more extensive coverage) is rather like trying to hold down the water level in the bath with your hands while keeping the tap turned on. The most it can achieve is to *shift* costs from the controlled services to those left uncontrolled. As the Heritage Foundation's Stuart Butler pointed out: "When President Reagan tried to control hospital costs, the result was an explosion in uncontrolled Medicare physician costs." And something similar happened in Quebec when doctors simply performed more services for their patients in order to maintain their income.

Dependency in a Cold Climate

IN SHORT, the hope of a broad-based health-care program with modest financial consequences is a chimera. Insofar as the expenses of such a program are held down, it will be at the cost of rationing and worse service—both unpopular. Insofar as the program is broad-based in treatment as well as coverage, it will not control costs. And since 80 per cent of these costs are to be financed by employer mandates and federal subsidies, the program will be a disproportionately heavy burden on small businesses (many facing health-care bills for the first time), occasionally and arbitrarily alleviated by the taxpayer.

If the U.S. were the entire world, it could contemplate an uncontrolled rise in broad-based social spending with equanimity, just as the world need not consider

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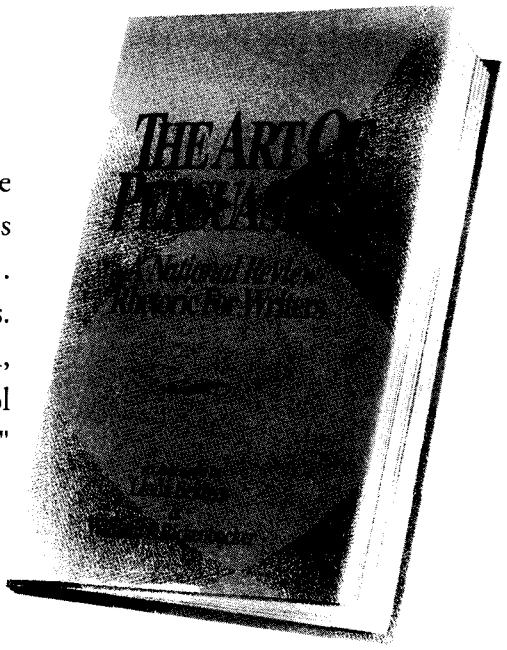

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competition from Mars when calculating its social costs. But the U.S. has until now been an anomaly in the global economy: an advanced country which holds government spending well below that in sluggish social-democratic Western Europe and therefore generates jobs as rapidly as the dynamic capitalist countries of East Asia. That is achieved in particular by lighter social burdens on the small businesses which generate most new jobs. Another broad-based social program, expanding demand without any clear idea of how to control costs, would erode that advantage just when the U.S. is facing stiff economic competition from Asia. And this burden would be imposed in order to seduce the middle class into Democratic allegiance by way of dependency on government programs.

What should the public-spirited citizen make of all this? In the words of G. K. Chesterton:

For he will learn, if he will try,
The deep interior truths whereby
We rule the Commonwealth;
What is the Food Controller's fee
And whether the Health Ministry
Are in it for their health.

Or, come to that, for our health. □

REINVENTING GOVERNMENT, REINVENTING HEALTH

WILLIAM A. NISKANEN

ON SEPTEMBER 7 Vice President Al Gore presented the Report of the National Performance Review, promising to reduce both the budget deficit and the "trust deficit" by reinventing government. The theme is that government officials and civil servants should be treated like responsible adults. The government should rely more on incentives and less on controls, increasing flexibility in exchange for increased accountability. The regulation of federal managers and the level of unfunded mandates on state and local governments should be massively reduced. No longer would agencies be required to purchase supplies and support services through monopoly purchasing agencies. Bureaucracy, paperwork, and waste would be reduced by increased competition, both from private suppliers and from other agencies. (David Osborne, the author of *Reinventing Government*, apparently read my 1971 book, *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*.) Government would operate more like a business.

On September 22, President Clinton summarized his complex plan to reform American health care, a major reorganization of this huge sector of the economy, the most expansive domestic-policy proposal since the New Deal. As is often the case, he was very articulate in describing the benefits of his proposed plan. The theme of this plan is very different from that of the Gore report. Patients and physicians are to be treated not as responsible adults but as pawns in a massive experiment in social engineering. The plan would rely more on controls and less on incentives, reducing the range of choice now in exchange for a promise of lower costs in the future. The regulation of health-care providers and the mandates on all employers would be massively increased. No longer would employers and individuals be allowed to select the health-insurance coverage they prefer; instead they would be required to buy a government-defined standard benefit package through a government-appointed monopoly purchasing agent in each region. Bureaucracy, paperwork, and waste would be increased by reduced competition, both among insurance companies and among health-care providers. The market for health care would be transformed into one giant government-managed bureaucracy.

Mr. Niskanen, currently chairman of the Cato Institute, was a member of the Council of Economic Advisors in the Reagan Administration.

One Cheer for Al

PUT ME DOWN as a skeptical supporter of Al Gore's proposals. A supporter because most of his proposed changes in the way Washington does its business are probably desirable, at least as experiments. Skeptical because we have seen many of these proposals before, with little measurable effect.

The primary challenge faced by the "efficiency zealots" (and I have been one) is that most government waste is there for the same reason that government programs are there—because someone with authority supports them. Moreover, waste is often more difficult to reduce than programs because most waste is ZIP-coded. Activities that most of us regard as waste are seen as jobs, perquisites, contracts, grants, or bases by those most directly affected. Government waste is the "profit" to the politicians and bureaucrats who run the government, and thus is often guarded more zealously than the interests of those who are served by government programs or of those who pay the bills.

Given the magnitude of this challenge, both the goal and the actions proposed by the Vice President are surprisingly modest. The report acknowledges that "The average American believes we waste 48 cents of every

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tax dollar." The total savings from the Gore proposals, however, are estimated to be about 1.3 per cent of the total federal expenditures now projected for the fiscal years 1994–2000. A small change, even if realized. Moreover, most of these savings may be spurious. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, in characteristic fedspeak, writes that "all but $4 billion is necessary just to meet the OBRA spending caps. The REGO savings do not represent additional deficit reduction. The report also suffers from wishful thinking. Two-thirds of the estimated savings results from unspecified 'system' savings. Specific agency and program level proposals account for only one-third of anticipated savings. Furthermore, at best, the savings are gross savings. The report ducks the issue of additional costs for a number of REGO proposals." Any savings from the Gore proposals, then, are likely to be lost in the noise.

One reason for the modest savings is that the Gore group seemed to have pulled their punches even when they were aimed at the right targets. Two examples illustrate this point. The report proposes to waive the "prevailing wage" requirements on federal construction contracts up to $100,000, but not on larger contracts, where all the money is. And the report proposes to reorganize the air-traffic-control system as a government corporation, like the Postal Service, rather than as a private, user-owned corporation. All too often, the report makes a good case for some management reform and then punts. The "trust deficit" is not likely to be reduced any more than the fiscal deficit.

Theory vs. Practice

ON OCCASION, nevertheless, it is worth while to put aside one's hard-earned skepticism to evaluate the proposed changes on their own merit. On this basis, the report deserves reading and support. Most of the text and proposals could have been written by the Reagan Administration. A broader commitment to these general themes would lead to many more suggestions for specific savings.

Five proposals caught my special attention:

1. The report recommends a substantial increase in the electric-power rates charged by the federal power-marketing administrations. As a member of Congress from Tennessee, interestingly, Mr. Gore was especially protective of subsidized power, at one time summoning me to a star-chamber hearing on the charge that I had been thinking on the job about this issue. Late converts should be forgiven for their prior sins.

2. The Administration is urged to set a goal of reducing the internal regulations affecting federal agencies by 50 per cent. The Gore report is silent, however, about the much more costly regulations affecting the private sector, except to note that the new regulatory review process "will be more useful and realistic."

3. Cabinet secretaries and agency heads should have the "authority to grant states and localities selective waivers from federal regulations or mandates." How

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would Congress react to a request for similar authority to waive regulations affecting the private sector?

4. The report urges the President to issue a directive limiting the use of unfunded mandates on state and local governments. That would be valuable discipline and would shift the accountability for the remaining mandates to those political authorities that imposed the costs. A few days later, however, President Clinton proposed a large mandate on private employers to finance his health-care plan.

5. Finally, the report strongly criticizes the regulations that require government agencies to purchase supplies, support services, printing, and real estate through a centralized purchasing agency. The report recommends that agencies be allowed to purchase these services from any source. The centerpiece of the proposed restructuring of health care, in contrast, is a "health alliance" that would be a monopoly purchaser of health plans in each state or region. Al, call Bill!

Each of these proposals, of course, implies a double standard. That is not a sufficient basis for opposing them. Moreover, the perception of a double standard (as with politicians and teachers who oppose school choice but send their own children to private schools) can be a useful wedge in making the case that the private sector should not be subject to stricter standards.

No Cheers for Bill

PUT ME DOWN as a vigorous opponent of the Clinton health plan. Most of the problems of our current health-care system are a consequence of too much of the wrong kind of insurance, a legacy of prior government mistakes. The plan would substantially broaden insurance coverage and then try to constrain the adverse effects via bureaucratic controls.

All of us would be required to buy a standard benefits package that includes some services many of us would never think of using, and most of us would never purchase insurance to cover. For others, the standard package will not include some coverage they would prefer. Any one-size-fits-all benefits package, thus, will be too large for some and too small for others. Moreover, all those in the same plan would pay the same premium, whatever their expected use of medical care, substantially reducing the financial incentive to stay healthy. Broader coverage would be financed by higher taxes and mandates on employers, which would reduce the growth of employment and wages. This plan would be a massive transfer from those who expect to make little use of the health-care system to those who would incur the highest costs, regardless of the cause of this difference, and regardless of their income.

At the moment, all the projected costs of this plan are fantasy, because the indirect effects may be much larger than the direct effects. The most important relevant fact is that the current costs of Medicare and Medicaid are many times the official projections when the programs were approved.

The President seems to be either naïve or cynical—naïve if he believes that one can substantially increase the demand for health care without increasing prices and expenditures, cynical if he believes that he can convince Congress to approve this plan before the costs are apparent. A more immediate concern is that about half of the Senate Republicans have endorsed most of Mr. Clinton's major provisions, a strategy best described as a pre-emptive surrender to the largest expansion in federal powers in several decades.

In the end, responsive and efficient government should not be our primary concern. Doing the right thing more responsively or at lower cost is a worthwhile goal and may or may not reduce expenditures. Doing the wrong thing better serves no obvious purpose.

Our government was not designed to have limited powers. It *was* designed to be small. On a per-dollar basis, the Federal Government now probably has less waste, for example, than during the Jackson Administration and less graft than during the Grant Administration. But "waste, fraud, and abuse" did not matter much when the federal budget took up a tiny fraction of national output. Our primary problem is that we now have a huge inefficient government. Since 1929, for example, the federal budget's share of gross domestic product has increased from 2.6 per cent to 24.5 per cent, and the relative cost of federal regulations has probably increased at a similar rate. Our government now defines its own powers, without even rhetorical deference to the limited powers enumerated in the Constitution. Reinventing government may well be worth while. The huge expansion of federal powers to implement the Clinton health plan, in contrast, would be a threat to our physical, economic, and political health. □

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NATIONAL REVIEW West

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THE PROPOSITION BARRAGE

There's lots to choose from on California's November ballot. Does disaster loom just around the corner?

HAROLD JOHNSON

NR West Editor
Harold Johnson

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THE SCHOOL-CHOICE measure is getting most of the ink, but two other statewide ballot proposals also help make California's November special election among the most significant in years. Will Californians allow themselves to be taxed deeper into recessionary quicksand? That is the question posed by both Proposition 170, which would make it easier to raise property taxes for school construction, and Proposition 172, which would freeze in place the half-cent sales-tax increase that lawmakers delivered as a "temporary" (and ineffective) anti-deficit elixir two years back.

Dick Darman would be proud of Governor Pete Wilson's supportive stance on the two measures. But many conservative Republicans are less pleased that their party's leader, father of a tax increase of Darmanian proportions in 1991, is again embracing the "read my hips" school of economics.

Official party support for the higher levies promised by these two ini-

(Continues on page West-5)

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THE WEEK IN THE WEST

■ Bill Clinton said he would make California a domestic priority, as if things weren't bad enough here already.

■ Pete Wilson says he's philosophically committed to school vouchers, but can't support California's school-voucher initiative. He's also philosophically committed to low taxes, but gave California the biggest tax hike in any state's history. And he's philosophically committed to lean government, but the number of state employees has grown by at least 5,000 on his watch. Some Republicans wish he were philosophically committed to running for re-election.

■ California bureaucrats have managed to lose the records of 35,000 drunken-driving convictions for 1990, according to State Senator Bill Leonard of Upland. This has understandably undermined the impact of California's law threatening stiff punishment for repeat DUI convictions. Then again, maybe we should be thankful anytime officialdom doesn't get its act together. Can anything be worse than getting all the government you pay for?

■ What aid can Bill Clinton offer to combat violence in California's schools? a questioner asked the President in a recent Town Hall info-mercial. Congress, he said, should pass the Brady bill calling for a five-day waiting period for gun purchases. Nobody thought to tell Mr. Clinton that California already has a 15-day waiting period for gun sales.

■ Any suspicions that California state Treasurer Kathleen Brown might be that rarity, a don't-spend Democrat are being put to rest as Miss Brown positions herself for a run for governor next year. She's boosting a $200-million plan for college loans for middle-income families. Never mind that such aid fuels tuition inflation by desensitizing consumers to price. And never mind the dubious fiscal logic of more subsidies for the middle class. Miss Brown may claim she's "a different shade of Brown," to distance herself from brother Jerry (and from Ted Danson), but we would rather call her Clinton with a perm.

■ The "Spur Posse" wasn't the only organized group in California doing its part for sex on campus this year. During the final days of the legislative session, the Wilson administration lobbied successfully for measures allowing $50 million or more in federal dollars to be spent on school-based clinics and related health-care "services" for students. Take two condoms and call us in the morning.

■ THE CASE FOR SCHOOL CHOICE, File #11897: Rooms 8 and 9 at Park View (public) Elementary School in Victorville, California, "don't look like typical classrooms," reports the local *Daily Press*. "The 60 students sit on sofas, at tables, or even on the floor—wherever they feel most comfortable. And comfort is one of the keys to this experiment." Six- to nine-year-olds "have the freedom to move to any part of the room that attracts them—provided they complete all work expected by day's end." Work? Well, perhaps not in the traditional sense: "We see ourselves as facilitators, rather than as teachers who stand up and dictate," says one "teacher." "I like how we can sit with our friends," said a third-grader. "We can talk, but we have to get our work done too." It's called "restructuring." Meanwhile, TV viewers are bombarded by political commercials paid for by the teachers' unions with nightmare scenarios of what would happen if Proposition 174 passes and irresponsible parents can decide where their children go to school.

■ Federal efforts to safeguard the spotted owl have buzz-sawed thousands of lumber-related jobs in Washington, Oregon, and Northern California. Now NBC correspondent Roger O'Neil, in a September 17 broadcast, discloses, "Despite what government scientists and environmentalists said three years ago, there is nothing rare or threatened about the north-

"I wonder if the new health-care plan will cover those who, upon seeing it, have a nervous breakdown."

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ern spotted owl." O'Neil confirmed what independent researchers have been saying for some time: the owls flourish in the region's second-growth forests. Environmentalists whipped up fears about the owl's fate in order to pursue a larger agenda: whacking away at the timber industry. "The politics of environmentalism got in the way of careful science," O'Neil concludes. Isn't it time that we let science get in the way of the politics of environmentalism?

■ Senator Paul Wellstone wants members of Congress to be covered by the same health plan middle-income Americans will have to live with under the Clinton health reforms. This was too much for Senator Barbara Boxer, that guru of egalitarianism, who says senators should be free to choose the more expensive plan that supposedly will be available to wealthier folks, including, according to the Boxer program, those who make the laws the rest of us have to live by.

■ Ouch! Group legal services have been added to benefits available to many California state workers. "The plan will provide eligible [state] employees and their families access to a panel of 595 private California attorneys," according to David J. Tirapelle, director of the Department of Personnel Administration. There is one restriction. The lawyers can't be enlisted to sue the state or its labor unions. But businesses in California remain fair game.

■ Does Mickey Mouse oppose Proposition 13? You had to wonder after a speech by Michael Eisner at the Disneyland Hotel not long back. While touching on his company's plans for expanding its Southern California theme park—and the public-sector roadblocks to the project—Eisner went on to talk in general terms about the hassles with government faced by the larger business community. But he could cite only one specific example, and it left more than a few listeners scratching their heads: He zeroed in on the plank in Proposition 13 that makes it difficult to raise property taxes (by requiring a two-thirds vote). Come again? The best way for government to aid employers is by upping the tax bite? If Michael Eisner feels undertaxed, he could have eased his pain by waiting a few weeks to redeem that little stock option deal last year that gave him a tidy profit estimated at $197 million. He cashed in just before New Year's. If he'd delayed a bit, he could have shared more of his wealth with the IRS, under the new Clinton taxes. Seems his personal financial advisers are brainy, even if he gets his political insights by way of Dopey.

■ Discriminating vagrants are flocking to Seattle, and not all the locals are overjoyed. Civic activist Mark Sidren has gone so far as to suggest: "We need to make it a crime to . . . repeatedly urinate in public." A notion so outré that it galvanized the local ACLU into a defense of homelessness as "an alternative lifestyle" government has no right to restrict.

■ The *Seattle Times* warns would-be real-estate advertisers to avoid disciminatory terms in their ads in order "to avoid civil and criminal liability." Which prods Los Angeles law professor Gideon Kanner to ask: "*Criminal*? For using officially forbidden words in a newspaper ad?" Just what are some of these slurs that might land you in the slammer? Adult. Bachelor. Couple. Family (as in "perfect for family"). Mature. No children. One person. Retired. Single. Two people. Christian. Executive (as in "large executive home"). Mentally ill. Religious. Religious landmark (as in "near St. Mark's"). Older person. Race. Restricted. Senior discount. So much for what used to be called Property Rights, and, come to think of it, The Land of the Free.

Republican Apathy

THE NAMES of only six Republican legislators grace the "official endorsement" sheet handed out by the Yes on Propostition 174 people. Although we know of a handful of other members of the state Senate and Assembly who have come out for the school-choice measure but were unaccountably left off the list, the fact remains that Republican politicians have not exactly been warring with each other for prominent roles in the campaign.

Pete Wilson's opposition to 174 is one thing; he's a reliable friend of bureaucracy, the West Coast leader of the Rockefeller wing of the party. But why the reluctance among the state's GOP legislators to get vocal about an issue most support privately?

The curious result is that the most prominent campaigners for the initiative are from out of state—Bill Bennett, Jack Kemp, Lamar Alexander. (As of press time, rumors that California Attorney General Dan Lungren would endorse the initiative hadn't been born out.)

Off the record, officeholders chide the 174 campaign for not vigorously showcasing potentially friendly pols from in state. More than a few political professionals grumble that the 174 operation has been disorganized in general, at least until the arrival of campaign whiz Ken Khachigian.

The polls in suburban Republican districts also make legislators wary. When only half of respondents to a survey in conservative Orange County say they back 174, GOP strategists wonder whether the issue is worth a major outlay of political capital.

There have been fund-raising troubles, made all the more difficult by the powerful California Teach-

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ers Association, which not only has been spending plenty to beat the propostion, but gives generously to the state's politicians. Some legislative staffers say the union has a standing promise to shower greenbacks on the electoral opponents of any lawmaker who goes all-out for 174. The kind of prospect that can make a politician discover a timid streak.

Lawmakers who've been cowed by any of these calculations can learn something from Polly Williams, the Milwaukee Democratic legislator who sponsored that city's now-famous school-voucher program. Her boldness in the face of the same kind of apathy or bullying that confronts the school-choice effort in California, far from damaging her career, has made her stronger politically. More important, it is winning to her cause a growing army of converts among her state's voters.

That cause—parental rights and educational excellence through school choice—ought to be a priority issue for California Republicans, a cause for which GOP officeholders summon the guts to be leaders, not nervous followers.

WEST WORLD

■ "Does he have a death wish? It's an absolute Kevorkian move." So said Rep. **Bob Dornan** (R., Calif.) after **Pete Wilson** announced opposition to school-choice ballot proposal. Anger on the Right led to new talk of former Assemblyman **Tom McClintock** challenging Wilson in June primary. . . . **George Shultz** was among voucher backers who phoned Wilson to try to dissuade him from coming out against initiative. . . . Many longtime Wilson watchers recalled that, as mayor of San Diego in 1978, he opposed Proposition 13, forecasting dire consequences from **Howard Jarvis**'s handiwork, just as he's doing now concerning choice initiative. Mayor Wilson also flew to New Hampshire in 1976 to urge voters to oppose the dangerous **Ronald Reagan**. . . . Could Wilson's low poll ratings, and the electoral headaches they pose for California GOP, be a reason so few Republicans are exploring statewide offices? So far, Board of Equalization member **Matt Fong** is only annouced GOP candidate for Treasurer; Assemblyman **Stan Statham** is alone seeking lieutenant-governer nomination (although **Sonny Bono** is rumored to be interested); and none is openly talking about office of controller. . . . Political analyst **Dick Rosengarten**, publisher of *Calpeek* newsletter, reports that L.A. teachers' union president **Helen Bernstein** is considering seeking Democratic nomination to oppose GOP Assemblyman **Pat Nolan** of Glendale. . . . With U.S. Rep **Jay Kim** (Republican from Diamond Bar, California) under federal probe for alleged campaign-finance abuses, one possible primary challenger is Whittier Assemblyman **Paul Horcher**. He cast the deciding vote in favor of Pete Wilson's gargantuan 1991 tax-increase budget. . . . Following **Bill Clinton**'s pro-NAFTA speech at the White House, **George Bush**, who was present, gushed, "Now I understand why he's inside looking out and I'm outside looking in." One-time rabid Bush-backer **Bob Dornan** circled the quote and faxed it to political reporters with his written comment: "This is heartbreaking *pathetic*. I will never again support a non-fighter."

■ Southern California Rep. **Ron Packard** waves around a flier from FEMA and California's Office of Emergency Services headlined (in Spanish and English), "Where can I get [disaster] help if I'm not a U.S. citizen?" "Information is confidential and will not be shared with other federal agencies," the letter promises. 800 numbers are supplied in what Packard denounces as "recruitment literature" urging illegals to tap into subsidized services. . . . Friends of Project 10, Inc. (tied in with the program of same name in several L.A. schools that promotes the ideology of homosexual activists) is donating books on gay themes to any public-school library that promises to circulate them. . . . *Beverly Hills 90210* actress **Shannen Doherty**, known for feistiness off the set, was on the recieving end of abuse when *Us* gave her the third degree over why she dared attend last summer's Republican convention (where she led "Pledge of Allegiance"). "The thing is," Doherty told her prosecutorial interviewer, "that this a free country and nobody should be criticized for their political beliefs. . . . I'm a conservative. . . . I realize that the majority of people in the entertainment business happen to be Democrats." . . . Actress **Jane Alexander**, Bill (or **Hillary**?) Clinton's choice to head National Endowment for the Arts, is no stranger to politics. She's a board member of Earth Communications Office (ECO) a Hollywood group of enviro-zealots who lobby (with great success) to get alarmist messages inserted in films and TV fare. ECO's warning: "We have only ten years to save the planet." Promoted for the NEA post by **Paul Newman**, **Joanne Woodward**, and **Michael Douglas**, Miss Alexander is a veteran of anti-nuke activism, a board member of Womens's Action for New Directions (formerly the Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament). . . .Is producer **John Singleton** lobbying for a federal grant? His latest words of wisdom: "At 12-years-old I already had a contempt for fascist politics. [Reagan] was more of a monster than I could imagine at 12."

"Here C.E.O. stands for Clean Environment Official."

■ Bad News Dept.: **Barbara Boxer** had 100 per cent attendance record in first half of this congressional session.

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(Continued from page West-1)

tiatives would "redefine" the GOP, argued San Gabriel Valley Assemblyman Dick Mountjoy at the party's autumn state convention in Anaheim. The delegates heard him, and rebuffed Governor Wilson by approving a resolution slamming Proposition 172.

In the weeks since then, new forecasts by business economists at UCLA have underscored the convention's wisdom: recovery in California will be delayed at least six months beyond late 1993, according to these seers, who have been "consistently more pessimistic—and therefore more accurate"—than the Wilson administration, in the words of the *Sacramtento Bee*'s Dan Walters. If the UCLA analysts are on the money again this time, it is no auspicious moment for tax increases; and the budget the governor signed this summer, already soggy with red ink, will yield an even bigger deficit by January.

Wilson's defenders argue he has worked valiantly, and with some success, to restrain spending growth, but critics on the Right have difficulty joining in the cork-popping. With Assemblyman Mountjoy, they're worried about Wilson's success in helping to "redefine" the image of their party—and their movement (real conservatives are "willing to pay taxes," the governor told *This Week with David Brinkley* a couple of summers back).

But even aside from partisan political considerations, the two tax-increase initiatives are turkeys. Turning the "temporary" sales-tax hike into a gift that keeps on taking will only undermine spending power and saving habits; the levy translates into $190 per year in direct taxes and tax-driven price increases for a typical family of four, according to the Center for the

Denial All Around

MORE EVIDENCE that California sets trends for other states: Washington and Oregon now have their own versions of Jerry Brown in their statehouses.

Washington Governor Mike Lowry, who as a member of Congress was a Sandinista groupie, refuses to call his top aide in Olympia "chief of staff," because "chief" is demeaning to American Indians. Meanwhile, Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts spent a year communing with her state's citizens via two-way TV hook-ups she called "The Conversation."

Both of these New Age pols are enamored of an old-time political fix: big taxes. As a result, both are riding the tiger of a burgeoning tax revolt, much like the one that jarred California's Governor Moonbeam out of his meditations 15 years ago.

Governor Lowry campaigned for office last year on a promise he'd raise taxes "only as a last resort." Once elected, he endorsed a $1-billion tax hike, with the funds earmarked mostly for new social spending, including a state version of Clinton's universal health plan. One joke around the Capitol has it that aides to Lowry, who has long been interested in installing a state income tax at some point in the future, made him read his state-of-the-state speech from a prepared text for fear he'd slink up new taxes while on the podium.

In Oregon, Governor Roberts has thrown her support behind an attempt to impose a sales tax, which Oregon voters have rejected *eight* times over the years. Few doubt the latest effort will crash as well. (Montana voters, it is worth noting, overwhelmingly rejected a sales tax a few months ago, and may yet force a referendum on a recent increase in the state income tax.)

Mrs. Roberts clearly has a problem with denial. In 1990, Oregon voters passed Ballot Measure 5, which slashed local property taxes and required that state government make up the loss in revenue for local governments and schools. The sales-tax campaign is aimed at recapturing that lost booty.

In Washington, the revolt against Mr. Lowry's tax-and-spend ways takes the form of two initiatives, 601 and 602, that would roll back this year's new taxes, impose new supermajority requirements for future tax hikes, and limit total state spending increases to a formula linked to population and personal-income growth.

Initiative 602 was sponsored chiefly by Seattle businessmen and targets the tax and higher-education fee increases. Initiative 601, which would place an overall spending limitation, starting in 1996 (and also requires a popular vote for any tax increases, following the lead of Colorado and Oklahoma), was generated by a grassroots effort led by Republican State Senator Linda Smith and local chapters of Ross Perot's United We Stand America.

Mr. Rosenblatt is a political reporter for the Los Angeles Times. He received the 1992 Sidney Hillman Award.

Polls show both measures leading with wide margins.

The Democrat-controlled legislature has been issuing shrill warnings of devastating spending cuts. Voters, however, might not be swayed, given the steady flow of revelations of such public-sector waste as the globe-spanning junkets of state lottery officials, $44,000 shelled out for fish tanks in a new state building, and $1.9 million for a puppet theater.

The bureaucrats in Oregon aren't retreating without a fight, either. Despite the enactment of Measure 5 in 1990, state spending grew from $5.5 billion to $6.4 billion in the last two years. Teachers have been dining on 5 per cent yearly pay increases, even as drastic cuts in school funding have been threatened.

Oregon's tax measure has been crafted in an effort to hijack the agenda of the tax revolt. It would earmark sales-tax proceeds for schools and impose a limitation on state spending. Yet it's still a poison pill. According to a Cascade Policy Institute study by Ohio University economist Richard Vedder, a sales tax could cut Oregon retail employment by more than 30,000 and retail sales by more than $8 billion (partly because of a drop-off in cross-border buying by residents from neighboring states with higher levies).

If there's trepidation on leaders' faces in Salem and Olympia, it's because polls suggest voters aren't buying these arguments for the status quo—and November may bring, in both states, a strong vote against more taxes and spending. In both races,

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California Taxpayer. It has already worked substantial mischief. Californians bought $2.5 billion less in merchandise during 1991–92 (after the tax's initial imposition) than the previous year. This drop in retail sales, from $275.2 billion to $272.7 billion, was the worst quarterly decrease in three decades, according to former Assemblyman Tom McClintock.

The sales levy boosts costs for what economists call the "fixed factors" that have little or no mobility (poor people and real estate, for instance). "Proposition 172 will reduce the state's competitiveness," says economist Victor Canto, president of Laffer–Canto Associates in La Jolla. "Smart people who are well educated can leave. The inner-city people are immobile. Real estate is immobile. Those segments will get really hammered."

Supporters are marketing Proposition 172 as a means of shoring up law enforcement. But police and sheriffs' budgets are strained because state lawmakers seized more than $2.5 billion from the counties in order to avoid shaving that amount from a state budget that is hardly fat-free. (When

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Wilson administration officials say there have been massive cuts in state outlays, they're not factoring into their spending estimates the money they took from counties; add those dollars, and the "cuts" evaporate.)

In any case, there's no guarantee the sales-tax money would be used for police protection. Nothing would bar counties from splurging on pet projects by using the sales-tax dollars for police work, while transferring equivalent sums to pork-barrel fancies.

The official ballot description of the measure, under the innocuous title, "Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act of 1993," doesn't mention the word "tax" until the third sentence, and the summary doesn't include the phrase, "sales tax." Call it government by euphemism.

As for Proposition 170, the school-tax measure, Joel Fox of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association sums things up: "Hold onto your wallets." By lowering the vote requirement for passing school-construction bonds from two-thirds to a simple majority, this measure would invite a flood of new local exactions.

In the past half-decade, 46 per cent of school bonds put to votes around the state passed with the required two-thirds support; if a mere majority vote had been needed, the rate of bonds approved would have doubled—to 92 per cent, meaning billions of dollars in additional debt and taxes.

Proposition 170 is just the begin-

California Dreamin'—In Nevada

BRIAN GOLDOJARB has rediscovered the California Dream—in Nevada. Mr. Goldojarb is one of dozens of business owners who, infuriated by what he calls California's "toxic" anti-business environment, moved enterprises to Southern Nevada where taxes are low and local governments eager to help.

Goldojarb, co-owner of a safe-screening firm called Image Crafters, is so high on his adopted state that he has written and narrated radio spots for the Nevada Development Authority aimed at enticing California businesses to the Silver State. The ads caused a stir this summer when officials in the Los Angeles area objected to their pro-Nevada and (perceived) anti-California message.

"It was not easy to make the move, and it's certainly not easy for us to be California bashers," said Goldojarb. "But I feel we left a burning building, and we're yelling fire."

The California Goldojarb once embraced with a passion no longer ex-

Mr. Tammariello is a columnist and editorial writer for the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

ists. Essentially he was hounded out by what he calls a "totally unmanageable system of rules and regulations that business has great difficulty dealing with." The mare's nest of regulation I grew up with in California in the Sixties is happening in Nevada," says the UC Santa Barbara graduate.

Workers-compensation costs, the final straw for Goldojarb, although his firm's accident rate has been judged excellent by state authorities, he began being inundated with "stress" claims, as attorneys took to the airwaves to advertise such legal ploys. Some of Goldojarb's workers even pursued such claims after a dentist found they were grinding their teeth.

Goldojarb was also astounded when he received from Sacramento a 4,000-page book delineating the state's safety regulations. His business, then based in Monterey Park, was expected to comply.

He sought to generate interest in systemic changes, joining groups like Fedexpo and traveling to Sacramento to plead the case of small businesses. But legislative aides stuck a finger in his face and said, "If you want any time, cut the crap—you know you're not going anywhere." But go he did, joining two dozen California businesses that have resettled in the Las Vegas area just in the last year.

ANOTHER transplant is Ruben Nestares, general manager of Basic Food Flavors. His firm was driven from Southern California by the regulatory nightmare it confronted when it sought to relocate from one city to another.

He says it's much nicer in Nevada, where "our employees make out better because there's no state income tax. We've doubled in size and doubled our personnel. I used to be the number-one fan of California. The only thing I miss now is the ocean."

In an average week, more than five hundred Californians trade in their drivers' licenses for Nevada permits, and an expanding job base promises to keeping drawing workers to the state. Some longtime Nevadans fear the influx will eventually undermine the laissez-faire spirit of Nevadanism. But if newcomers speak of Goldojarb, who is the typical Californian, there's little to worry about.

—RAFAEL TAMMARIELLO

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ning, predicts Joel Fox: "Lined up behind it are measures to reduce the two-thirds vote protection for other kinds of bonds and to remove Proposition 13's two-thirds vote requirement for property-tax increases." Passage would be a setback for the movement to streamline public-school management and finances. California's education code decrees a multitude of inflationary regulations for the public system, including campuses larger and buildings more costly than those of many well-run private schools. The pressure to rethink such dictates will recede if the task of forcing property owners to underwrite them is made easier.

Remember that when local revenue measures come to a vote, many of the tax-receiving interests enjoy a head start, an organizational momentum financed by taxpayers themselves. Indeed, in recent weeks, school employees in many districts have used classrooms to lobby against the choice initiative by handing out literature to kids or turning back-to-school nights into anti-voucher teach-ins.

California's status as one of the highest-taxed jurisdictions in the Western Hemisphere offers the final rebuke to Propositions 170 and 172. Consider a reflection by Congressman Dana Rohrabacher: "At some level of taxation, income growth and prosperity in America will cease to exist. Taxation at some level turns a free people into servants, even slaves." If many conservative Republicans seem incurably grumpy with the tax-raising wing of their party, it's because they believe that, ultimately, more than mere prosperity is on the line. □

Conservative Summit

GOLDEN PROSPECTS

JOHN KURZWEIL

THE National Review Institute's end-of-summer Conservative Summit in La Jolla attracted an impressively large crowd—some 400 or so people—so maybe all that talk last year that a Clinton victory might bring conservatives a healthy stimulation was, after all, more than just straining for a silver lining. In any event, I left after a day and a half stimulated by a dazzling array of speakers (and attendees).

Cheerfulness under adversity was something of an underlying theme, hit on early by TV writer Rob Long, who remarked that "recent studies show that one of every three Hollywood conservatives ends up as President."

George Gilder was all optimism with an absorbing talk about technologies that will soon create a "global web of glass and light"—breakthroughs in fiber optics and silicon chips that will slash costs and open a world of communications almost anyone can afford. This trend, he said, gives the lie to the old socialist nostrum that the world is headed toward greater centralization of power. Indeed, soon after the end of the century many of the Left's strongholds, such as the monopolistic public-schools system, may be obsolete.

At lunch, Bill Rusher related a telling incident described to him by former California Assemblyman Tom McClintock. During last year's floor debates on the state budget, McClintock asked a Democrat colleague why he seemed unconcerned about soaring taxes and regulations driving away California's productive population. "They're all Republicans" who are leaving, the Democrat answered.

NR Editor John O'Sullivan gave the multiculturalism debates some context with a discussion of how nations come to be, using as his example the English: "a mongrel group formed of ancient Britons, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Celts, Danes, Normans, Huguenots, some Irish, some Welsh, some Scots, and East European Jews who came at the end of the last century. That's the English. The British are less exclusive." What begins as a cultural gathering, he said, over time becomes also an ethnic entity through "common history, habits, tastes, shared experiences, . . . and above all, intermarriage." Liberal overemphasis of cultural differences, he said, too often ignores this inevitable historical growing together of a nation's various populations.

Bill Bennett said his career during the Reagan–Bush years, "got worse all the time. When I was chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, we would go to Degas openings and sip white wine with the liberals. Then I became Secretary of Education and got into fights with the presidents of Harvard and Stanford and teachers unions. Then I became drug czar and went to busts in Miami. So when I left that, Elaine said what's next dear? Toxic and hazardous waste clean-up? I said no. I'm going to be chairman of the Republican National Committee."

A possible opening to Hollywood was spied by producer Lionel Chetwynd, who suggested, hopefully, that Senator Paul Simon's flirtation with censorship of "excessive violence" could be used against liberals. Steve Carter, a conservative activist in Hollywood, meanwhile urged conservative business people to get involved in the promotion of films or film-school scholarships supporting free-market ideas.

During the closing panel ("The New Politics of Sex") David Horowitz placed radical homosexuals at the center of the leftists' universe: "The last thing radicals want is to be accepted. That would be selling out . . . Unhappiness with the human condition . . . is not peripheral to the radical viewpoint. It *is* the radical viewpoint . . ."

There was much more, including a talk on entertainment-industry "values" by Michael Medved, an exploration of immigration issues by Peter Brimelow and others, and a sobering reminder by Norman Podhoretz of the Left's continued determination to turn the Land of the Free into a socialist's notion of utopia.

The crowd's warm reception for Bruce Herschensohn showed that his support, at least among this group, has strong staying power, having survived two disappointing electoral defeats. That is good, because dependable conservative leaders of Herschensohn's caliber are too few, and because greater perseverance marks a maturing political movement. □

Mr. Kurzweil is editor of the California Political Review.

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West Coast Diary

No Teacher's Pet

WHEN DID I give up on the public schools? I would say about one and a half years ago, not long after my show-and-tell night at the local board of education.

I came to display (not proudly) some coloring my son had done in his third-grade class. First thing every Friday morning, the class would spend a half hour taking marking pens and crayons to paper, filling in the blanks. Pretty mindless stuff, I thought. At other times, the pupils who finished class assignments early were told to color, presumably to keep them from getting ahead of their classmates, a practice called "advancing," which was frowned upon.

But my son was not very interested in coloring, and he had not been filling in the spaces to the teacher's satisfaction. He got points off for leaving too many gaps—this in a class where misspellings were consistently ignored.

This all seemed very strange—a third-grader being forced to put his brain in idle. So, after my wife talked to the teacher and principal and got nowhere, I decided I would make a scene at the school board. I took some of my son's work to the board, stood up at the podium during open comment time, passed the sheets to the board members, and tried to explain that coloring assignments in the third grade might not be the best way to ensure America's global competitiveness. Nobody said much. The president of the board said she trusted the teacher's judgment, and that was the end of the discussion.

No one seemed even mildly surprised, much less shocked. In time I came to understand why: Mindless work was part of the plan, especially for kids who were in danger of leaving their classmates behind. This was my introduction to the new public-school pedagogy, based on the theory that a mind is a terrible thing to fill up with knowledge.

Not long after my fruitless attempt to shock the school board, the school threw itself into "restructuring," a dumbing-down fad that seems to have penetrated most school districts by now. My district, a well-regarded system in a comfortable corner of Ventura County, seemed to be leading the way in casting off quaint traditions, like real grades and the teaching of grammar. The principal, in one of his newsletters, declared that some of the methods the school had been using hadn't changed since the Middle Ages. That sounded pretty good to me. I respect pedagogical techniques that have stood the test of time (and these, if our principal was right, might even have helped bring on the Renaissance).

But of course, that's not what the principal was driving at. He, like most public-school officials I have come across in recent years, loved the new for its own sake. He couldn't leave well enough alone.

I heard one concerned parent ask the principal whether the new curriculum would prepare his kid for the SAT. The answer: Don't worry. By the time that kid takes the SAT, it will be changed, too. Eventually, I suppose the restructuring crew will then set itself to changing the job market and the rest of real life, so that the victims of this miseducation will not suffer from their lack of knowledge and essential intellectual skills.

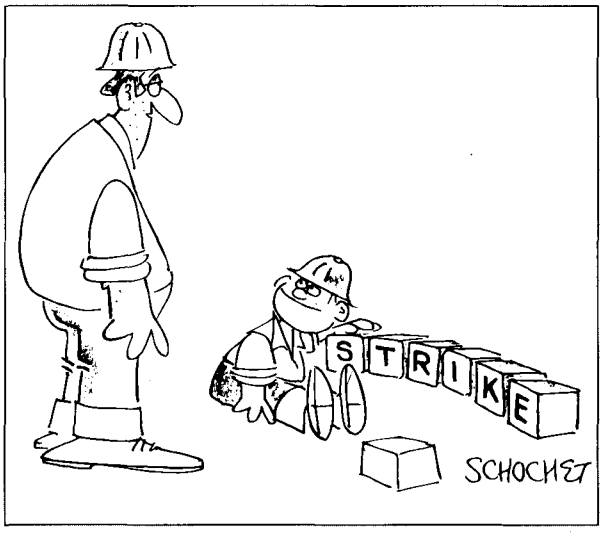
What surprised me then, and what dismays me now, is how most of the parents seemed to take all this lying down. I live in a community with all the conditions that are supposed to produce public-school execellence: Relative affluence, high educational levels among the parents, comparatively few one-parent homes, lots of involvement by parents in the school, and safe campuses. Compared to war-zone schools in Los Angeles, the schools out here in the suburbs look good. But they could be doing a lot better.

THE NEARBY presence of L.A. may be the problem. Most people here are refugees, who fled the city and, as so many of them say, "moved here for the schools," and they still judge the suburban schools by the standards of the chaotic Los Angeles Unified School District. Compared to chaos, the suburban schools are pretty good. But judged by the potential of the children who attend them—intensively prepared kids who have just about every educational break going for them—the schools' performance is as disappointing as anything in the inner city.

Back where kids go to school hungry and have playground drop drills for drive-by shootings, the schools can say with some plausibility that their failure is not all their fault. Out here, where kids lead the good life, there can be no such excuses. All of the schools' wounds are self-inflicted.

I suspect that the school-voucher initiative on the November 2 ballot will not do very well in my area, since the public schools here have not yet lost the respect of the community. But people outside the educational loop are still old-fashioned enough to take the basics seriously. Some time soon, word will get around that the schools are no longer teaching grammar and that bright young minds are going to waste. The parents' revolt may not come soon, but the schools are certainly doing their best to bring it about.

—TOM GRAY



Mr. Gray is editorial-page editor of the Los Angeles Daily News.

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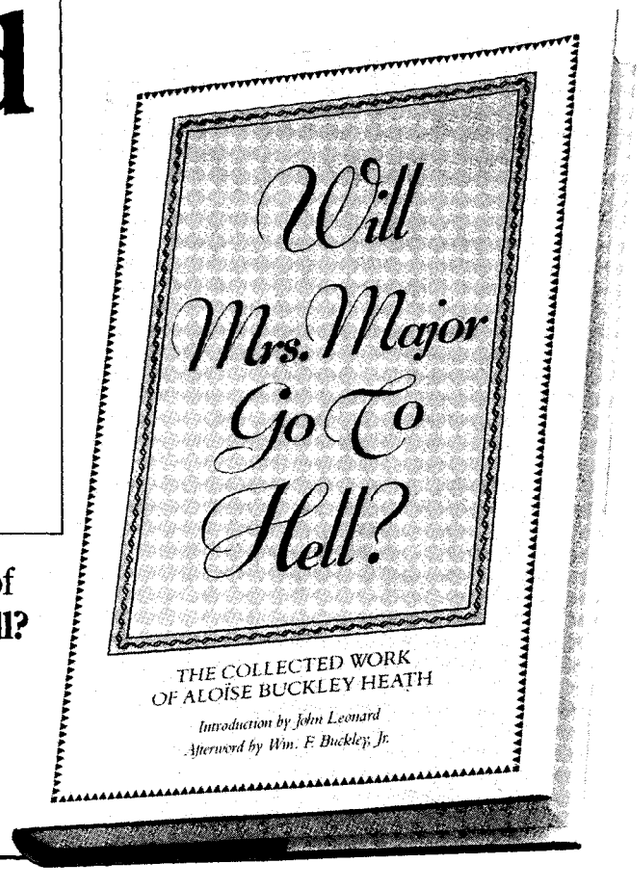
Will Mrs. Major Go To Hell?
THE COLLECTED WORK OF ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH
Introduction by John Leonard
Afterword by Wm. F. Buckley, Jr.

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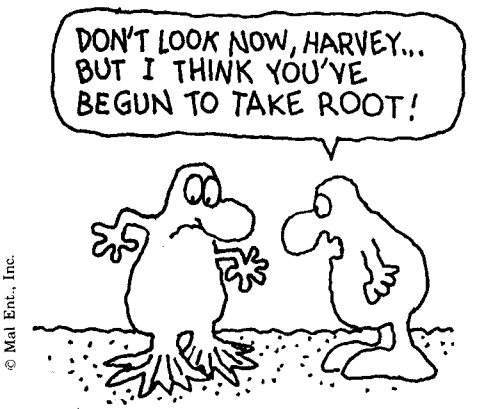
help

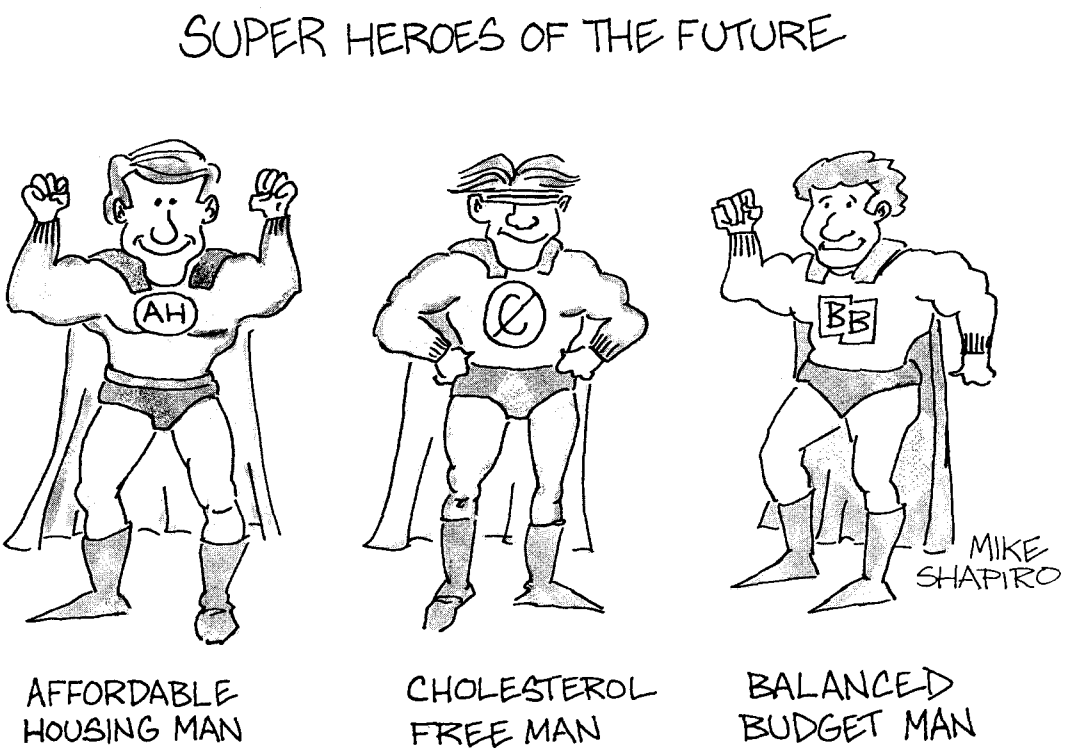
"I didn't know there really was a 'Good Old Boy Network.'"

When Kow-Towing Fails

Knees bent, with foreheads on the floor,
  This deferential pose
Preceded talks with Manchus, who
  Would either hold a nose
Or nod imperial ascent,
  A custom still observed
By Communists, whose recent *boom*
  Left Washington unnerved.

W. H. VON DREELE





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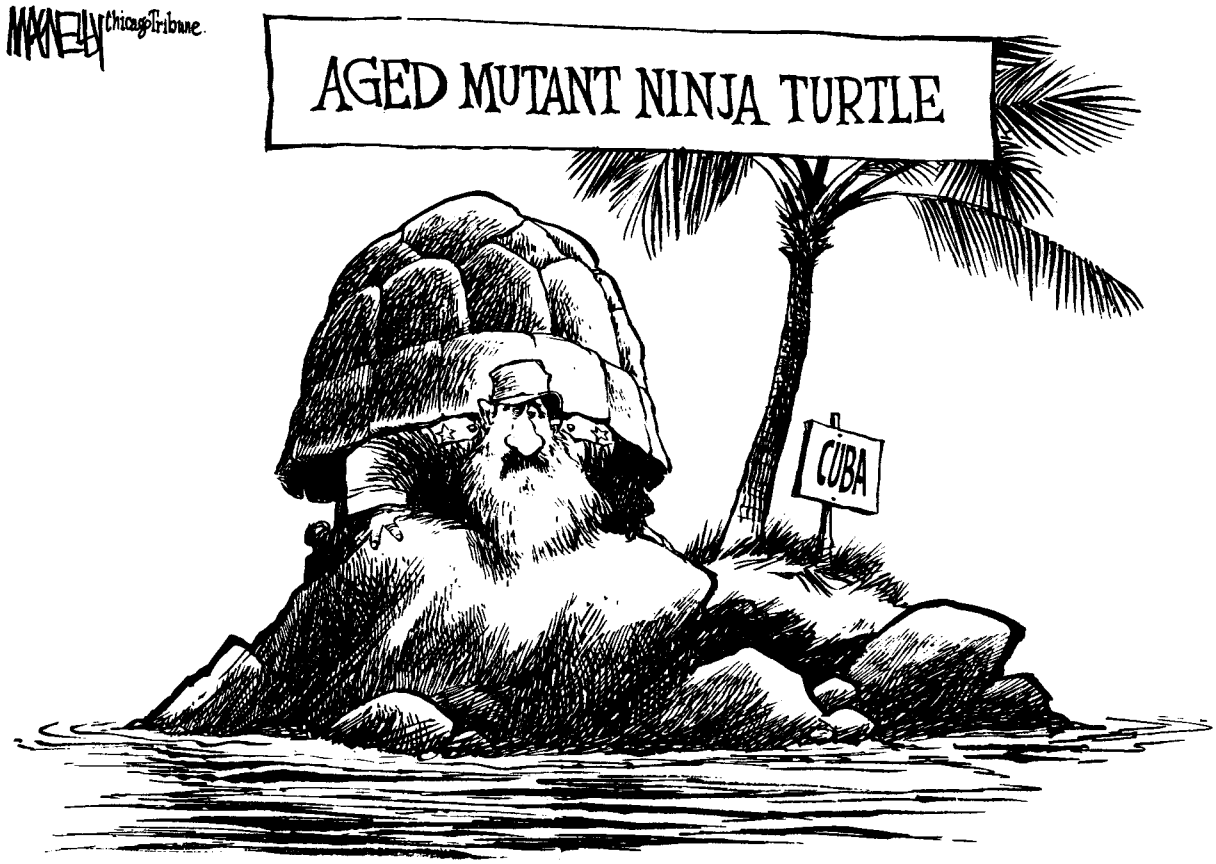

"BILL... YOU'VE BEEN INHALING..."

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White House Mess

TO THE ABYSS AND BACK

Boris Yeltsin was lucky in his opponents. But whether or not his luck holds, the West needs to rethink its Eastern policy. Clausewitz would have understood.

JAMES SHERR

LENIN would have said, "I told you so." There are no kind ways to stage a coup. It matters not whether the coup is mounted by sitting presidents or against them, in the name of democracy or in opposition to it. Boris Yeltsin's action on September 21 was a presidential coup. It overturned lawful, if widely loathed, authority and an established, if unworkable, constitution. Like any coup worthy of the name, it was backed by overwhelming force.

Clausewitz said that, though war does not have its own grammar, it has its own syntax. So it is with any kind of force, and so it was this past fortnight. At a critical point in the presidential–parliamentary struggle, Yeltsin disregarded this syntax. Miraculously, his error roused his opponents, Aleksandr Rutskoi and Ruslan Khasbulatov, to folly. So deranged and dramatic was their folly that it provided the means of Yeltsin's deliverance. Had they desisted, Yeltsin would have had to choose between international approval and the crushing of his opponents. On Monday, October 4, he secured both.

Yet the events which began with Yeltsin's Decree No. 1400 on September 21 and which culminated with the storming of Moscow's House of Soviets are only the first act. Rarely in history (and never in Russia) has a clean sweep of one's enemies produced a clean slate. Those who gave Yeltsin his victory—Russia's army and security forces—cannot just be bowed off the stage. They are the beneficiaries of Yeltsin's victory every bit as much as the radicals, Westernizers, and free-marketeers, and they constitute some of the most conservative, nationalistic, and disaffected portions of Russian society. What is more, their services will be needed in the future. If Yeltsin does not come to rue the price of his victory, he may rue the debts he has incurred.

Last month, Yeltsin's preoccupations were justifiably different. In the course of nearly two years, *dvoyevlastiye*—the "diarchy of power" between Russia's president and Parliament—had given a new meaning to Lenin's principle: "What we give with one hand, we take with the other." During this time, Russia became a country of mafias rather than capitalists, rigged markets rather than free markets, and, as it has often been throughout history, both over-regulated and lawless. While the diarchy did not produce this condition, it made it impossible to overcome.

The opening moves in Yeltsin's climactic struggle with Parliament and his own vice president, Aleksandr Rutskoi, were impeccable: far better prepared than they were on March 20, when he last locked horns with Russia's Supreme Soviet. Then, he and his entourage acted from weakness. This time they acted from strength.

Preparing Yeltsin's Way

YELTSIN'S April 25 referendum victory was a blow which Parliament did not expect and from which it never recovered. In contrast, Yeltsin's supporters unobtrusively but methodically used the five intervening months to change the balance of forces. Through the constitutional negotiations they outmaneuvered—and through their financial levers they outbid—Parliament in cultivating regional support. By acting in defiance of parliamentary legislation, they strengthened their already considerable control over the media. Not least, they finally brought the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Security, and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) into line.

This latter development was of crucial importance. By design, the security and internal-affairs bodies have long possessed their own military establishments, independent of the Ministry of Defense: a state of affairs exemplifying the "divide and rule" principle that underpinned the Communist system. When that system collapsed, the divisions remained, but the Party leash disappeared. According to several accounts, the minister of secu-

Mr. Sherr is lecturer in international relations at Lincoln College, Oxford, and a research fellow at the Conflict Studies Research Center at Sandhurst.

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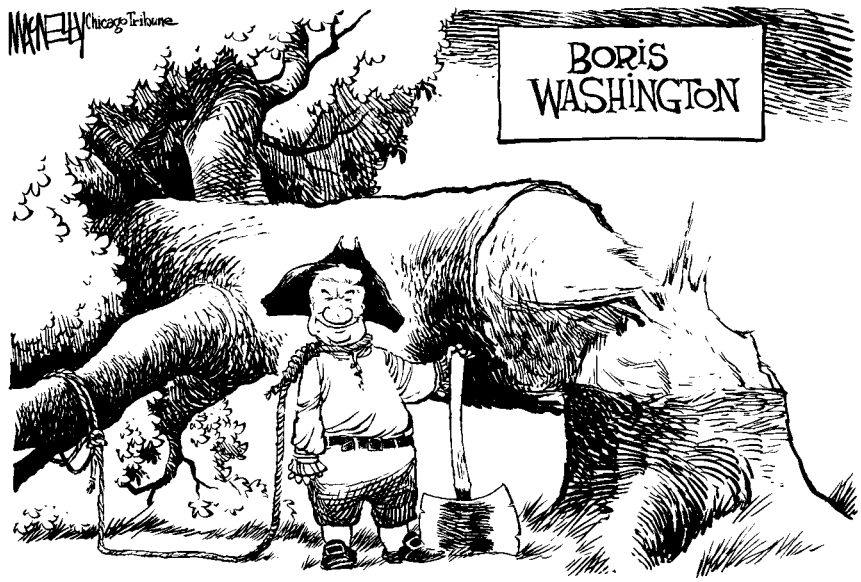
rity, Viktor Barannikov, all but vetoed a plan for emergency rule in October 1992. During the referendum crisis of March–April 1993, he let it be known that he was nobody's man.

In July, the Tajikistan crisis gave Yeltsin his opportunity. On July 27, he sacked not only Barannikov, but also his subordinate, Colonel General Shlyakhtin, the commander of Russian Federation Border Troops, as well as his ally, Andrei Dunayev, the first deputy interior minister. As Dunayev disappeared, so did the backbone of the MVD, whose minister, Viktor Yerin, has always been loyal to his keepers. Barannikov's replacement, Nikolai Golushko, while vastly more able than Yerin, also embodied a talent for changing his spots. A thirty-year KGB



professional, he chaired the Ukrainian KGB from 1987 to 1991, then put his expertise at the service of newly independent Ukraine, and then switched horses again by becoming Barannikov's deputy. Such figures are threats to their friends, not to their chiefs.

Thus, by September 21, Yeltsin had set up his game. Not only were the "power ministers" behind him, but he had also secured pledges of loyalty from the commanders of the two airborne and two army divisions surrounding the capital, as well as from the commander of the MVD's elite division (which still bears the name of Feliks Dzerzhinsky, founder of the *Cheka*). The mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, had long been in Yeltsin's pocket, as was Moscow's divisional-strength contingent of the elite "special designation" militia (OMON).

But all of these maneuvers were based upon a gamble: that trumps plainly seen need not be played. This was a bold gamble indeed. The decree did not demand surrender, it merely assumed it. It issued no ultimata, set no deadlines, offered no terms. It simply decreed that the functions of the Supreme Soviet and Congress of People's Deputies would "stop."

For several days, it seemed that Parliament would sputter into irrelevance. Yet by the following week Parliament's "last gasp" (to use Yeltsin's phrase) was igniting brushfires, both in Moscow and in several of Russia's economically critical regions.

Behind a best-case plan, there must be a worst-case plan. Yeltsin had gambled on a strategy of force without violence. But was there a strategy for *using* force? To all appearances, there was none. Having tightened the cordon of militia and Internal Troops after the 24th, Yeltsin thinned it out on the 29th. After his first deputy prime minister declared "there could be no compromise," Yeltsin agreed to talks on the 30th. While the government publicly quarreled with itself over whether to concede simultaneous elections, it issued an ultimatum to the occupants of the White House. Although the ultimatum's tone left no doubt that force *would* be used, its authors swore that it would not.

This equivocation nearly cost Yeltsin his victory. It altered a key variable of conflict, the "moral correlation of forces." To a weak defender, there is nothing more inspiring than the irresolution of a strong attacker. In the final days of September, Yeltsin's irresolution revived a dead cause. It also conceded that most valuable strategic commodity to his parliamentary opponents: time. Time rarely favors the attacking side, as Moscow's wartime defenders understood. On this occasion, time enabled crowds to form, weapons to be distributed, and regions to organize. Inevitably, the material correlation of forces altered as well.

This shift in the balance of forces was most obvious in the behavior of the Federation's 88 regions. On the 26th, 39 local-soviet leaders and a few administrative heads assembled in St. Petersburg and put forward a number of moderate proposals for resolving the crisis. On the 29th, a far more determined body assembled in Novosibirsk and issued its own ultimatum: lift the blockade, or a Siberian Republic would be established, taxes withheld, federal property confiscated, and the Trans-Siberian Railway halted. On the 30th, most of this body decamped to the Constitutional Court in Moscow and prepared to march on the White House itself. There is little wonder that Moscow's brushfires soon became a conflagration.

Nothing to Lose?

YELTSIN'S strategy ignored the first rule of conflict: "Know your enemy." There are enemies who are rattled by intimidation and enemies who are riled by it. There are enemies who follow the principle of *sauve qui peut* and those who put principle above survival. Both types were present at the White House. Understandably, the vast majority chose to bow to the balance of forces rather than test them. Some defected out of prudence, some out of political calculation, and some in the heartfelt belief that bloodshed would be tragic for Russia. A larger number simply allowed themselves to be bought.

But what of the rest: not only the cofounders of post-Soviet Russia, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi (who vowed to "fight to the last drop of blood"), but Generals Achalov and Makashov, the unrepentant supporters of the August 1991 coup? What of their praetorian guard, the "hired murderers" from Transdneistria, Abkhazia, and the dreaded Riga OMON? Yeltsin's supporters warned that these fighters "know what it is to kill and are not traumatized by killing." Did they not grasp that this was an army of the fu-

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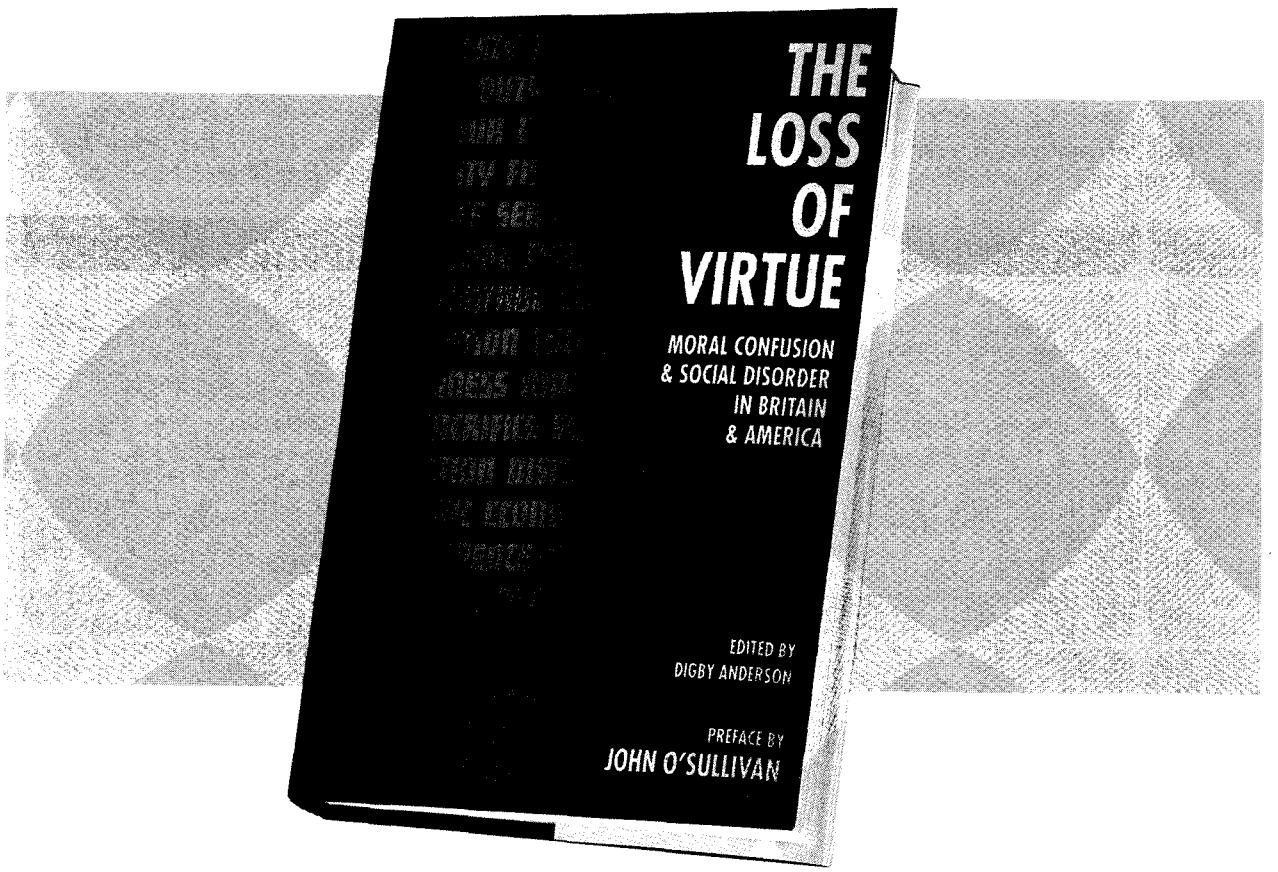
The Loss of Virtue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tureless, composed of people who had nothing to lose and, for that reason, even more dangerous than fanatics who have a world to gain?

One must assume that Yeltsin knew there would be a hard core and knew who would constitute it. But what did he expect the "defenders of the White House" to do? Did he expect they would be brought to their senses by candlelight, cold food, and dead telephones? Did he really suppose that they would leave the weapons of the White House *Okhrana* (Protection Directorate) in their storerooms? Or did he predict what Nikolai Vitruk, deputy chairman of the Constitutional Court, predicted four days before the event: "Rutskoi will order an offensive, and there will be a slaughter"?

It is not a rhetorical question. Russians will ask it even if we refuse. *Provokatsia* (provocation) plays as large a role in Russia as pork-barrel politics does in the United States. Did Yeltsin not need a provocation? The West's advice—"Be decisive, be nice"—could not be implemented, but had to be respected. Leaders seeking democratic legitimacy need an excuse to slaughter even their most anti-democratic opponents. Did Yeltsin lure Rutskoi into providing that excuse? Was the sack-

The Chelovek in the Street

MOSCOW—The armored personnel carriers and the military inspectors have finished their work at Moscow's White House. The fires are out, the stockpiled weapons rounded up, even the spent bullets mostly collected by memento scavengers.

If the aftermath of the 1991 coup attempt brought mass elation, this time it's mass depression. Among the steady stream of pilgrims to the charred marble edifice, there is none of the smiling chatter one saw here in 1991. Now visitors stand in solemn silence, then turn away and trudge back up the street.

The euphoria is missing partly because this time no one came out a hero. "This could all have been avoided," says Vladimir Bezubov, a 25-year-old electrician. "Everyone is guilty."

He holds a common view. Even as troops stormed the White House, many of the gawkers who filled the nearby streets said they supported the president's economic reforms but not Mr. Yeltsin himself. Five young men stood in the shelter of a low wall on October 4. The men, in their twenties, worked together in a small importing business they had set up. "We're here to support ourselves," said 25-year-old Aleksei Razumtsov. "We don't know who we are for yet, but we know who we're against."

A day later, Muscovites were second-guessing the whole affair. Early conspiracy theories in which Mr. Yeltsin masterminded the chain of events gave way to exasperation with what appeared to be incompetence. "It was a mistake for Yeltsin to look for compromises," says Vladimir Kuznetsov, a 24-year-old mechanic. "He claims to be decisive, but in the end, he wasn't."

Others were incensed that Mr. Yeltsin seemed to have disappeared on Sunday and Monday. He had made no public address, and indeed, state television went off the air altogether once the attack on the premises began. Newly reappointed Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar's call to the public to take to the streets in support of Mr. Yeltsin was seen as repulsive: Mr. Gaidar was inviting unarmed supporters to face down heavily armed opponents. Eventually, a report by Sergei Parkhomenko of the *Segodnya* newspaper, who had been inside the Kremlin throughout those tense hours, made it past the censors, and the public read his account of panic and disarray in Yeltsin's camp.

Officials quickly started trying to bandage over this impression. A series of decrees crushing local and regional soviets, or councils, was followed by an extension of martial law. The defense minister publicly refuted charges that the Kremlin had been at a loss.

"It's as if now the government is trying to compensate for their lack of clear action at the time," says Andrei Zolotov, a Moscow graduate student. "On Sunday night, I was truly afraid that those bandits were taking over. I can never forgive the government for leaving me to feel that way."

Mr. Yeltsin is not faring much better outside of Moscow. Chelyabinsk, a formerly closed region in the Urals that was the center of Soviet nuclear production, is typical. Mr. Yeltsin's hand-picked governor now has the upper hand in his running battle with the regional soviet, and members of the soviet worry plaintively whether anyone cares about them any more.

But if residents of Chelyabinsk don't miss their soviet, they don't embrace the administration either. Likewise, although they approve of Mr. Yeltsin's attack on the White House as necessary, they don't necessarily intend to vote for him.

"Two bears cannot live in one den," says Leonid Zhobolov, a retired Chelyabinsk railroad worker, explaining why he "absolutely supports" the attack on the White House. But, he adds, "They should all be sent into retirement, including Yeltsin."

The Chelyabinsk administrators realize they haven't won the hearts and minds of the residents, so they are drawing new electoral districts to avoid giving too large a voice to rural voters (who tended to support the soviets), banning various opposition organizations, and dominating the local mass media.

Mr. Yeltsin and his elitist team must contend with the same lack of trust on the national level. They are now weighing which reforms can be tolerated ahead of an election and how to appeal to the public. They will probably do worse if they spend the coming weeks calculating betting averages rather than addressing the deeper question of how to rebuild faith in government.

"It's time for a change," says Vadim Novikov, a driver in Moscow. "Yeltsin is also part of the [Communist] Party *nomenklatura* system." Echoes Tamara Timanova, a utility worker thousands of miles away in Chelyabinsk, "There should be elections for everything. We want all new people." —ELISABETH RUBINFIEN

Miss Rubinfien is a Moscow correspondent for the Wall Street Journal.

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ing of the mayor's office and the television station but the latest example of what the Russian Army calls "reflexive control": the science of inducing an opponent to defeat himself by his own efforts?

It is most unlikely. The supposition demands too much of Yeltsin: not only too much coolness, but too much recklessness. When the group of 3,500 to 4,000 broke through the OMON cordon and, "using tactics of seizure from the rear and flanks," "liberated" the White House on October 3, they nearly won. Had the liberators stayed put and stayed quiet, it would have been all but impossible to reimpose a blockade of the White House, let alone storm it. Yeltsin would have been forced into a debilitating compromise. It was Rutskoi, not Yeltsin, who threw this opportunity away and launched the mob on its trajectory of destruction across Moscow. Who could be certain that he would? Although Yeltsin is the beneficiary of Rutskoi's folly, he is unlikely to have been its instigator.

What is likely is that Yeltsin waited for his opponents to overplay their hand, but grossly misjudged their capacity to overplay it. This explanation is also consistent with the simplest: that Yeltsin underestimated the rebound of the parliamentary cause, just as Rutskoi and Khasbulatov overestimated it.

Risks Ahead

TODAY the risk is that others might overestimate Yeltsin's triumph. Ahead lie two imponderables: the regions and the army.

Thanks to the conclusiveness of Yeltsin's Moscow victory, most regions could turn far more compliant than they have been to date. Outside the Federation's non-Russian republics (e.g., Chechenia), regional leaders are wily vassals of the center, not principled opponents. They act according to the Russian maxim: Oppose weakness, not strength. For them a weak central power is a target of opportunity. Had Yeltsin compromised or lost, the opportunities would have been vast and the temptations irresistible. The risks of disintegration might be far greater than they are today.

But "might" is the operative word. Some regional authorities have already gone too far to retreat. Others may wish to comply with Yeltsin but know that they might be toppled from below if they do. The oft-cited anti-reformist minority of "only" 30 per cent is an average of averages, and it says nothing about the passions of the 30 per cent. In regions dependent upon heavy manufacturing, as well as the defense and energy complexes, the numbers are higher, and passions are deep. Several regional leaders may conclude that it would be better to lead a mob than be pursued by one. Should this occur, the "moral correlation of forces" could alter again.

Fearing these possibilities, Yeltsin may feel forced to pre-empt rather than react. Such pre-emption might not only retard democracy further but reintroduce the syntax of force.

Of the support given to Yeltsin by his power ministers, that pledged by Defense Minister Pavel Grachev was the most significant and the most reluctant. It is one thing to commit four elite (and well-paid) divisions to a one-sided assault in the capital. It is quite another to be able to predict what seventy divisions in various states of fitness and morale will do. For all the efforts to professionalize the Russian Army, it is still a conscript army, and it reflects the divisions of its society. It is also an unhappy army. Scarcely a single officer would dissent from the views General Achalov expressed in his last recorded interview:

> Officers and fighters must enjoy exceptionally high prestige . . . [the officer] must serve the state loyally, and the state must take care of him, not only in words but in real deeds, so that when an officer runs away—as he was forced to by senior commanders—he would come, not to a tent, but to a decent flat. He must always know that when his term is up . . . he is well provided for. He should not have to go to work as a porter at a train station, a janitor, or a furnace stoker.

Yeltsin and his successors may have little choice but to make that program their own. If they do, they may preserve stability in Russia and even reform it. But they will reform it according to Russian imperatives, rather than Western models. There may at last be shock therapy of a kind—bankruptcies, mass unemployment, the end of subsidies—counterbalanced by military priorities which both we and Russia's neighbors find uncomfortable. In the future, it is likely that "social protection" will be targeted to servicemen, while "words" rather than "deeds" are found for pensioners and others who cannot adapt. The equation between "calm in the army and calm in the country" may not prove conducive to calm in the ex-Soviet "near abroad," let alone compatible with Western-style democracy.

This would not be a good outcome to Russia's crisis, but it might be the best outcome possible, and it would be vastly better than several alternatives. The question is whether the West can discard its infatuation with "democratic Russia" and return to the principles of enlightened state interest that guided foreign policy before Cold Wars and Common European Homes were thought of. If post–Cold War "help" were replaced by an Old World combination of firmness, dispassion, and respect, Russia's "patriots" (and many of her democrats) would think far better of the West than they do at present.

This said, it is still very possible that key regions will defy Yeltsin and that the army will divide. If so, Russia will descend into its second Time of Troubles and the West will be left with a foreign-policy calamity. □

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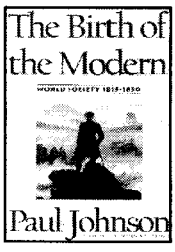

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Peacemaking 101

A NASTY LITTLE WAR

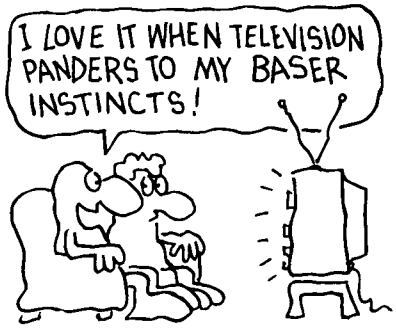
Is it possible to retrieve our mission in Somalia? What *is* our mission in Somalia?

ELIOT A. COHEN

THE BLOODY, horrible events in Somalia offer a sobering reminder that "peacemaking" is but the naïf's name for war. The revolting spectacle of American corpses being dragged about the streets of Mogadishu, and the reality of a dozen American deaths, brought home this simple thought. Several weeks earlier, reports of American helicopters spraying twenty-millimeter cannon shells into a Somali mob that included grenade-tossing women and children prompted some senators to ask—too late—why we are in Somalia and when we should leave. Now, at any rate, the Administration will have to rethink its policy there. But policy may be too generous a term for the blend of sentimentality, wishful thinking, and absent-mindedness that has led us into a nasty little war.

Some have argued that the Somalia fiasco resulted from the expansion of a feasible and narrowly humanitarian mission of famine relief into something far more ambitious and far less tractable. Such a case would vindicate the burst of altruism that led the Bush Administration to throw 25,000 troops into the Horn of Africa without a trace of national interest to justify their action. Such excuses, however, fail to exculpate President Bush. Did he or his former Cabinet members publicly declaim against the strategic error of an expanded mission this spring? And does not his former deputy national-security advisor, Admiral Jonathan Howe, serve as the UN representative in Somalia?

The current predicament originated in the commitment to Somalia in the first place, and not simply in the blunders of the Clinton Administration. The Somali famine that induced our intervention originated not in the caprices of nature, but in the anarchy of men. The American intervention came to remedy the chaos bred by years of civil war. To end the famine, the occupying forces had to restore order. To restore order we had either to cow or to bribe the thugs who stole food from



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their countrymen and terrorized aid workers. Unwilling to buy off the bandits, we chose to coerce them. They fought back. We have pursued the most wily of these bandit chieftains with the results we have seen.

The origins of this crisis have to do, in part, with an overreaction to a military caution about the use of force that reached for impossible levels of political clarity and certitude about the outcome. Such conservatism may well resurface after the Somalia affair has ended. But the more profound reasons for the current state of affairs have to do with the dangerous naïveté about force that has spread in our policy elites. It is astonishing how little play was made of the inefficiency and corruption of the United Nations. More than a few American officers have returned from Somalia admiring General Aidid's men far more than America's allies. How little attention was given to news reports that the Italians not only disagreed with American policy, but went so far as to tip Aidid off in advance of raids on his hiding places. Americans, brought up with a heritage of anti-colonialism, seemed to forget that establishing law and order in a society that has known neither is the work of decades.

Vietniks 25 Years Later

WHAT IRONY, to have an Administration staffed by so many notable opponents of the Vietnam War shrugging off the steady trickle of civilian casualties our intervention inevitably caused. Many of them might have demonstrated against American atrocities 25 years ago, and surely many of them would have scorned our eagerness to right the world's wrongs with tracer bullets and self-propelled grenades. How curious the spectacle of those talking about nation-building, who a quarter-century ago would have—correctly—deplored the absurdity of such a notion.

These paradoxes are not so amusing for American soldiers who now dread what will happen to them should they fall into the hands of gunmen who desire to avenge themselves on an army they cannot outshoot. Alas, we cannot, as some singed hawks now wish, flutter away from Somalia overnight. Our government put American prestige on the line by making the original commitment to Somalia, singling out for capture the man we should have negotiated with, and then sending our very best commandos to track him down. Should we withdraw now, we send an unacceptable message to all potential adversaries: kill a dozen Americans and desecrate the corpses, and the Yanks will cave in. For the sake of cases where our national interest *is* at stake, that is a lesson we cannot afford to teach anyone.

The outlines of a workable policy might be this: to admit (within the government, if not publicly) that our chief purposes now are to restore our prestige and to get out of Somalia. To do the former, we will need to make Aidid and his men pay in blood for the atrocities in Mogadishu: it is probably no longer in the American interest to take him alive, if the grimmer alterna-

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tive exists. The American people should be prepared for bloody deeds.

Above all, the President, and all American leaders, should learn the importance of telling the truth about "peacemaking." They should have the nerve to say what such international altruism entails—a deployment of thousands of young American men and women to distant lands not for months, but for years. They should warn of the inevitable death, at our hands, of civilians used as human shields by cruel warriors who understand our qualms all too well. They should concede the inevitability of casualties—and the disappearance of a few soldiers, who may reappear only as battered cadavers on foreign streets. They should remember that war is war, even if it does not involve massed armored divisions charging through a desert. They must be willing to wage it to protect American interests, and to maintain the fundamental order necessary for civilized interchange among nations. But—and this is the essential first step—they must have the courage to call war by its ugly name. □

The Refugee Act

THEIR TEEMING SHORES

If you qualify as a refugee, you may find that our streets really are paved with gold.

DON BARNETT

A REFUGEE, according to the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980, is a person who is "persecuted or who has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion." In fact, the refugee program, which accounts for one in seven legal immigrants to the U.S., in large measure has become an expensive special-interest program, which Senator Alan Simpson calls "embarrassing to all of us who truly know the mission of the Refugee Act."

The Act was originally used to expedite resettlement of some of our allies in the Vietnam War. Eighteen years after the war we still accept about 50,000 Southeast Asians (mostly from Vietnam) each year. Last year, about 85 per cent of the refugee quota, determined annually by the President in consultation with Congress, was split between Southeast Asians and former Soviets.

Since 1975, about 1.7 million persons have been admitted as refugees (not including nearly 1 million Cubans). About 1.1 million of these have migrated from Southeast Asia, 350,000 from the former Soviet Union, and 100,000 from Eastern Europe. Some 70,000 refugee visas have been split between Africa and Latin America and another 70,000 between Afghanistan and the Mideast.

The guidelines to be used for admitting refugees require that first priority be given to a) those "refugees who are in immediate danger of loss of life and for whom there appears to be no alternative to resettlement in the U.S. or b) refugees of compelling concern to the United States such as former or present political prisoners and dissidents."

One clear sign of incoherence in the United States' refugee policy is the fact that the vast majority of refugees are admitted on the basis of family connections. Eighty per cent of Southeast Asians come in under family-reunification provisions. Most of the balance of Southeast Asian admissions are for children fathered by American soldiers—a stream which, with relatives, will total 100,000 by the time the program ends in 1994. In 1992, 37 per cent of those admitted under this program were born *after* the last American soldier left Vietnam.

Most ex-Soviets need not prove persecution to be classed as refugees. According to the 1989 Lautenberg Amendment, they need merely assert membership in one of several groups (Jewish, Evangelical, Ukrainian Catholic, or Ukrainian Orthodox) to qualify as a refugee. Eighty per cent of the refugee quota from Russia and its former republics goes to Jewish applicants; most of the balance is awarded to Evangelicals. But almost all the former Soviets admitted not only belong to a Lautenberg category but also have relatives in the United States—an uncle or nephew recently arrived as a refugee is sufficient in some cases to guarantee acceptance in the program.

This influx may be moderated somewhat by Israeli concern that the opportunity to migrate to America is diverting Soviet Jews from Israel. Indeed, the fact that most emigrants from the former Soviet Union *can* go to Israel proves that they could not possibly be refugees as that term is normally defined.

We Surrender

THE United States has defined broad legal categories for refugee admission but it has surrendered all control over the selection of *individuals* who enter the country; that decision is the prerogative of persons in entitled categories—i.e., the prospective immigrants themselves.

Refugee admission, as we have seen, parallels the family-chain pattern of most other forms of immigration to the United States. Since citizenship is not required of the "anchor" relative, it is simply an accelerated version of normal immigration. Making family reunification the engine of immigration and refugee admission is defended both on humanitarian grounds and as a practical way to select among the great numbers desiring to enter the United States. A refugee and immigration policy committed to the reunification of extended families ensures a growing pool of automatically eligible

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applicants. For those eligible for refugee benefits, it is a group entitlement too good to pass up.

Because of the humanitarian nature of the refugee program, refugees are exempt from qualifications and restrictions that apply to other immigrants, who can legally be deported if they become a public charge within five years after their arrival. Besides transitional cash support and a loan for airplane tickets, refugees are entitled to the same welfare programs as U.S. citizens are.

Though the federal budget contains line items for refugee support, the bulk of the expense is borne outside refugee programs in the untrackable

Follow the Money

IN the welter of events following the catastrophe at the World Trade Center, few noticed that the first man arrested, Mohammed Salameh—the poor, unemployed illegal immigrant from an impoverished family—volunteered $5 million to bail himself out. Where did this money come from? Subsequently, the FBI identified more than $100,000 transferred from Europe to the bank accounts of Salameh and others. Is the same source responsible for funding the eight men arrested in Queens for allegedly planning to blow up tunnels and bridges and assassinate public officials?

In 1992 Congress passed a law authored by Senator Grassley giving federal courts jurisdiction over civil suits filed against terrorist organizations by American victims. The law also requires the Treasury Department to report assets held in the United States by terrorist countries and organizations. Grassley's initiative was prompted by the common wisdom of "follow the money trail." But the Treasury Department did not comply with the law.

Because Treasury has failed to implement Grassley's amendment, terrorists are able to raise funds and use them at will. The April report by Treasury listed the assets of the six countries on the terrorist list (Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, and Syria), but failed to report on assets of well-known terrorist organizations such as the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), the PLO, and the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS). Had Treasury fulfilled its obligation to look into these groups, perhaps the money supporting Salameh would have been detected in time to *prevent* the World Trade Center bombing.

When BCCI went belly up in the summer of 1991, we learned that Abu Nidal and the PLO had accounts in the bank. More importantly, we also discovered that the American and British governments knew and kept that information secret. The PLO leaders, who strongly supported Saddam Hussein before, during, and after the Gulf War, met with the leaders of HAMAS in Khartoum in January 1993 and issued a joint statement of cooperation and collaboration. The statement stressed the need for fundraising to support intensification and escalation of the *intifada*. Sudan is yet to be put on the terrorist list, and instead of reprimanding the PLO, the U.S. Government rewarded it by arranging for continuing Saudi subsidies and by inviting it to participate in the Middle East peace talks.

VARIOUS U.S.-based organizations such as the Islamic Foundations for Education, the Islamic Committee for Palestine, the United Funds for the Holy Land, the Holy Land Foundation, the Islamic Association for Palestine, Mercy International, and the American Muslim Council are among the major Muslim fundraising organizations dedicated to expanding radical Muslim fundamentalism in the United States. These organizations acquire funds under the guise of religious, charitable, educational, and cultural activities, many of which are perfectly legitimate. Their anti-American, anti-Western stance is dismissed as "religious fervor." Yet their religious activities mask their real political agenda.

The funds they collect are usually smuggled out of the U.S., often in cash in large quantities, sometimes in gold. But not all the money collected in the U.S. ends up abroad. Some of it is transferred back to promote social services, build mosques, organize conferences, publish newsletters, and support terrorist activities.

In St. Louis last March, the Justice Department indicted members of the ANO under RICO, charging them with smuggling money, conspiring to kill American Jews, plotting to blow up the Israeli Embassy, and illegally purchasing weapons. In January, Mohammad Jarad and Mohammed Salah were arrested in Israel for smuggling over $600,000 for HAMAS. Both were members of the Mosque Foundation in Bridgeview, Illinois. Early in June, both pleaded guilty and were sentenced to six months in prison in Israel. In April of this year, Norman Gabay, an American businessman, filed a civil suit in New York District Court against the New York–based Alavi and Iran-based Mostazafan Foundations for $56 million in compensation for companies of his which were seized during the Iranian revolution. Apparently, U.S. regulators who granted tax-exempt status to the Alavi Foundation were unaware of the real nature of these charitable organizations. The two foundations have a mandate to provide care for families of the Hezbollah members who carried out the suicide bombing mission against the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983. Back in 1989, the Alavi Foundation's anti-American activities in the U.S. were questioned in the media. Yet the IRS failed to investigate.

Allowing terrorist organizations and foundations to operate in the United States with impunity creates an obvious danger for U.S. citizens. Rewarding them with tax-exempt status adds insult to injury, forcing Americans to pay for their own endangerment through heavier tax burdens. No wonder, as Senator D'Amato commented in a recent interview, the terrorists are "laughing at us."

—RACHEL EHRENFELD

Miss Ehrenfeld is the author of Narco-Terrorism *and* Evil Money: Encounters along the Money Trail.

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wilderness of state and federal social services. Since few statistics on welfare utilization account for refugees separately from the general population, the true cost of refugee support cannot be calculated. However, in 1992 the federal portion of the bill for resettlement of refugees was officially $709.3 million. The National Governors Association estimates that expenditures at the state and local levels are an additional $620 million for the first year of refugee support alone. Most refugees remain dependent well beyond a year.

A 1992 HHS study of Southeast Asian refugees who arrived between 1986 and 1991 found 52 per cent of the group to be totally dependent upon welfare and an additional 13 per cent to be supplementing earned income with welfare benefits. The average education level upon arrival of those 16 and over in the study group is equivalent to the sixth grade, placing them in the growing and increasingly unemployable unskilled-labor pool.

According to senior officials at HHS's Office of Refugee Resettlement and the California State Refugee Coordinator, about 53 per cent of all the refugees who have settled in California since 1976 are dependent upon AFDC and other welfare programs. (Take note, all who would "redefine welfare as we know it.") Assigning an absurdly low per-capita carrying cost of $3,500 for yearly support through AFDC, Medi-Cal, Medicare, Food Stamps, Public Housing, SSI, etc. (AFDC per-capita cost alone in California is about $2,300) would mean that California shoulders about $1 billion a year in costs which should be carried in a column labeled "Refugee Resettlement Costs."

The California data might be expected to show somewhat higher welfare dependency than the national average for refugees owing to peculiarities in counting welfare users in California, and to the state's generous welfare benefits. However, according to the author of the statistical studies for HHS, "California is the norm," with roughly the same proportion of Southeast Asian refugees nationwide living below the poverty line, if not wholly dependent upon welfare.

Refugee flows inevitably have an impact on other immigrant categories. For instance, in 1992 the number of Vietnamese arriving as non-refugee immigrants was about equal to the number arriving as refugees. Most of the non-refugee visas were granted because of some family tie with an individual who had arrived earlier through the refugee program. A total of about 85,000 Vietnamese arrived in 1992, making Vietnam second only to Mexico as a source of immigration to the United States. With the Clinton–Gore commitment to reunification of *extended* families, this number can only grow.

A Turn for the Better?

THE FORMER Soviet Union and its successor republics have replaced Southeast Asia as the biggest source of refugees to the United States—61,000 in 1992. Russia will probably head the list of refugee-sending countries through the Nineties. (Candidate Clinton promised 50,000 refugee visas a year for Soviet Jews alone.)

The educational level of ex-Soviets is high, and many assimilate quickly and successfully. But a 1991 HHS study indicates about 44 per cent of refugees from the former USSR are still dependent upon public cash assistance a year after arrival. The actual rate of welfare dependence is higher still, since the study excluded two categories: those aged 65 and over—14.5 per cent of recent arrivals—who are entitled to SSI/Medicare, and those receiving only non-cash assistance, such as Food Stamps and Public Housing.

Analysis of 1990 Census data suggests a high use of public assistance in seemingly vibrant Russian neighborhoods in New York City. In two Census tracts in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach, for instance, 24 and 38 per cent respectively of all households received public cash assistance, compared with a national average of 7.5 per cent.

An article in an April 1991 issue of the Moscow newspaper *The Independent* notes some of the opportunities in America. "The benefits are real. Our son attended an excellent private school for which he didn't pay a cent. Then he went to college for free. . . . The apartment we live in rents for half of what it should normally go for. They say you have to wait on a list for three years for government apartments like these, but there are ways to move ahead on the list. Smarter émigrés will rent their apartments to dumber newcomers and pocket the difference. . . . My mother-in-law lives in her own [subsidized] apartment and receives a full [U.S.] pension, which surprises even me . . . this is a poor man's paradise."

No one should be surprised at the demand generated by the chance to find in New York the social guarantees that failed in Moscow. Nor should it comes as a surprise to discover that socializing the costs has led to politicizing the distribution of the benefits, a feature of the system the ex-Soviets are fleeing.

Hidden from View

THE REFUGEE industry—an alliance of lawyers, government bureaucrats, church bureaucrats, charities, and lobbyists for all of the above—has shielded the refugee program from the kind of attention now being directed to immigration policy in general. Writing in the *New York Times* in December 1992, the chairman of the Refugee Committee of the American Immigration Lawyers Association cautioned against confusing ordinary immigrants with refugees, who, he says, are fleeing for their lives and "are unable to return to their country because of a real threat to life or liberty." (For the record, more than 85 per cent of refugees to the U.S. come directly from their country of origin.) In fact, a conflation of refugee policy and immigration policy is exactly what has happened. Refugee admission to a large degree is simply immigration by another name, where costs, normally incumbent upon the immigrant and his sponsor, have been shifted to the U.S. taxpayer.

The actual sponsor of refugees is Health and Human Services, an organization abysmally ill-equipped to integrate new arrivals into American life. True, private sponsoring agencies *do* play a role in resettling refugees. However, as with much of the language surrounding this issue, familiar terms have taken on new meaning.

Resettlement programs based on private sponsorship might be expected to provide an organic link to an established community, hasten integration into the culture, language, and economy, and provide an impetus toward self-sufficiency by placing the costs on the sponsor and the immigrant. Sponsorship implies risk, sacrifice, and

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commitment between sponsor and client. That ethos is totally lacking in the current program.

Most sponsoring agencies receive federal funds on a per-refugee basis—more refugees mean more income. Their main function is to guide their clientele through the process of entering various welfare programs. The sponsoring agency is not even responsible for the transportation loan for the individuals they sponsor. Since the inception of the loan program, the State Department has collected less than 31 cents on every dollar lent for air fare to the United States. A State Department spokesman doubted that even half of the interest-free loans would ever be collected. Though possibly an illustration of the entrepreneurial spirit, this does not not augur well for the revival of civic virtue supposedly heralded by the new arrivals.

There is a yearly quota for *truly* privately funded refugees. Ten thousand visas are made available for sponsorship of refugees by organizations and individuals willing to cover all resettlement costs and guarantee support once the refugee has settled in America. However, this route is not commonly followed. Supposedly endangered applicants often wait for years in their country of origin for a spot on the public-refugee track. In 1992, 132,000 were admitted as publicly funded refugees while only 861 came in on the private, pay-as-you-go program. Where have all the humanitarians gone? As a State Department official explained, "They tried it one year and realized it would be too expensive."

Direct federal involvement in the refugee program has followed the now-familiar pattern of rapid disengagement from the funding of the Federal Government's own mandates. On this issue even the Republicans seem willing to present a hidden cost as a cost cut. The last budget proposed by the Bush Administration proposed reducing refugee funding while breezily reminding readers that "refugees would continue to be eligible for regular welfare benefits on the same basis as citizens." This budgetary sleight-of-hand has allowed federal funding for refugee support to drop from the original three-year period in 1980 to today's eight months.

The states, faced with a mounting unfunded liability, readily lined up behind a suit brought by refugees (with the legal fees paid by the taxpayers) to enjoin the Federal Government from implementing a plan to further reduce transitional assistance to seven months and to bypass state agencies completely in the distribution of all refugee funds. Under the contested plan the money would go instead to the sponsoring agencies, known as Voluntary Agencies or Volags. (It is fitting that some of the euphemisms spawned by the refugee industry sound like the inventions of old-style *Pravda* editorialists.)

Concern in state capitals about the bypassing of state agencies may be dismissed as an issue of job security for a redundant level of bureaucrats, but several state refugee coordinators make a persuasive case for the inability and institutional disinclination of the Volags to follow up on refugee health problems. Thirteen per cent of refugees and immigrants from Southeast Asia are actively infected with Hepatitis B, according to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta (CDC). About 65 per cent of infants born in America with Hepatitis B are born of immigrant parents, many of whom came in on the refugee program. CDC considers immigration from high TB areas to be one of the three main causes of the recent surge of TB in America. Slightly more than one in four cases of active TB in the U.S. originate among foreign-born residents, most of whom immigrated as refugees. Also, according to CDC, drug-resistant TB is more commonly found in this group than it is among the general population of TB patients. Much of the arriving Southeast Asian refugee population has "special needs that will last well beyond the initial resettlement period," according to the U.S. Refugee Coordinator. About half of the entire Southeast Asian refugee population should be monitored to check for the spread of TB. Some health workers say that these screening and tracking programs will be compromised by the new plan.

Real Refugees

PERHAPS the success of a refugee program should not be measured purely in terms of the national interest; but surely it should at least assist real refugees. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, almost no one emigrating from the former Soviet Union today is a bona-fide refugee. According to a State Department official, only a minority of Southeast Asian arrivals meet a common-sense definition of the term "refugee."

Certainly, many who arrive here on the refugee track make a valuable contribution to American life. We owe it to ourselves to structure the program to favor those who can make such a contribution. An important step would be shifting the admissions stream from public to private sponsorship. If there is to be any hope of balance and the establishment of even a rudimentary selection process, all costs must be brought home to the sponsoring agencies, the anchor families, and the refugees themselves.

For those deemed to be truly refugees, transitional funds must be provided. However, if unable to find honest money to fund the program, the President and the Congress should find the political will to reduce the numbers admitted. All funds used for refugee support should be strictly segregated from other public funds. It might then be possible to compare the effectiveness of lending a hand at rebuilding an economy (or, in the case of Vietnam, simply normalizing trade) as opposed to underwriting a mass migration. Above all, new arrivals should *not* be entitled to welfare on the same

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basis as citizens. We cannot provide a safety net for the world; we risk becoming a global welfare magnet if we try.

As it now operates, our refugee policy makes it harder for those who are truly seeking freedom and opportunity in America, and diminishes our ability to protect those who are truly fleeing persecution. □

The Civil Rights Initiative

THE END OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

Can California voters reverse the unintended consequences of the 1964 Civil Rights Act?

WILLIAM A. RUSHER

ONE of the disadvantages conservatives labor under today is that they spend a lot of time on the defensive. Their opponents are forever proposing harebrained schemes that cry out to be resisted. Inevitably, therefore, most of the game takes place between the 50-yard line and the conservatives' goalpost. The conservatives occasionally prevail, but they rarely score.

Hence the great importance of the initiative process, which in 23 states enables voters to vote directly on legislative or even constitutional questions. The Democrats may control Congress and a majority of state legislatures, but if a state's constitution permits a proposal to be put directly before the people when a specified number of voters so requests, then a whole new arena for conservative action is opened up. When that state is California, with a population 20 per cent larger than Canada's, the battle that ensues is of national significance.

That's why the National Education Association and the rest of the immense teachers' lobby will spend somewhere between $12 and $15 million in an effort to defeat Proposition 174 (the school-voucher initiative) on the California ballot this November. And it's also why the California Civil Rights Initiative, which a handful of conservatives is trying to put on the ballot in 1994, is the hottest political potato anybody has rolled onto the liberals' plate in years.

When the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, its supporters heatedly denied suggestions that it could or would be used to confer special advantages on minorities. Its whole purpose, Senator Hubert Humphrey and others insisted, was precisely to *prevent* favoring one group over another.

Of course, *where specific prior discrimination can be proved,* it is agreed that it should be remedied by favoring the individual or group that was wronged. But over the years the civil-rights lobby has sought to use the 1964 Act to move beyond this well-recognized exception to the rule against favoritism, and the courts—including the Supreme Court—have sometimes acquiesced. Today the Act is often cited by "civil-rights activists" as a mandate to favor certain minorities even *without* proof of specific prior discrimination.

While usually denying that they are attempting to impose racial or ethnic "quotas," they have sought to require a rough proportionality between the conferring of various benefits and the percentages of specified racial or ethnic groups in a given area.

The process is called "affirmative action" (or, more accurately, "reverse discrimination"), and it is the policy under which whites are now frequently turned down: for admission to public colleges and universities in favor of applicants of other races or ethnic origins who scored lower on their SATs; for employment on police forces and in fire departments, as well as many other kinds of public jobs, despite higher qualifications; and as bidders for public contracts, even though their bids are lowest.

Favoritism in Disfavor

VIRTUALLY every scientific survey of public opinion shows that less than 30 per cent of Americans support racial preferences. A 1987 Gallup poll found that, nationwide, two-thirds of identified Democrats and four-fifths of identified Republicans oppose them.

And yet, like some immense glacier, "affirmative action" inches quietly forward, indirectly harming most of all those who are its intended beneficiaries. For example, as many able blacks know to their bitter regret, the value of a college degree is often discounted because the recipient is suspected of having been admitted, graded acceptably, and graduated only because of his or her "minority" status.

That is why the following proposition, or something close to it, is being readied to appear on the ballot in November 1994 as a proposed amendment to California's constitution:

> The People of the State of California find and declare that race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or religion are not legitimate criteria for conferring or denying preferential treatment to any student or prospective student in any matter in this state's public educational system; any individual or firm in any matter concerning public contracting; or any employee or

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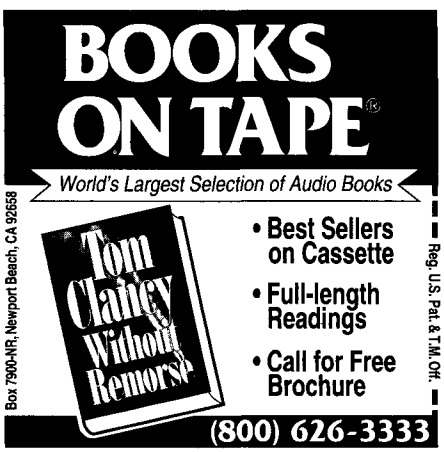
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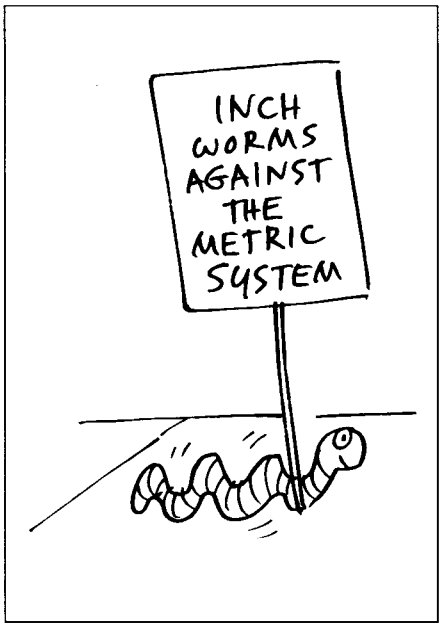

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Use of the prohibited criteria in any of the foregoing ways shall constitute a violation of the California Constitution and shall be actionable in any court of competent jurisdiction.

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The dilemma into which this will plunge the whole national liberal establishment is obvious. If liberals oppose it (as they most certainly will), they will be admitting that they support discrimination against whites, and in favor of the various minority constituencies in the Great Democratic Coalition, *even where there is no evidence that the favored individuals are themselves victims of discrimination.* Moreover, many of the 22 other states that have the initiative process will predictably follow. There will be something approaching a national referendum on the issue of "affirmative action." It is a battle the liberals will be compelled to fight, and are doomed to lose.

But putting a proposition on the California ballot is a tougher job than you might imagine. In the first place, it will require petitions containing 615,958 valid signatures (and in practice, of course, many more). And money—lots of it—will have to be raised for TV spots, mailings, etc., for the opposition will be ferocious.

Another problem is that, in California right now, all eyes are focused on the school-voucher battle climaxing next month, so even seed money for a battle not to be waged until 1994 is hard to come by. That is why the California-based strategists behind the measure are beginning to wonder whether conservatives in some smaller state, with less demanding requirements, would like to grab this ball and run with it.

Certainly the driblets of publicity the initiative has received thus far are encouraging. Letters (to P. O. Box 11795, Berkeley, Calif. 94701-2795) and phone calls (to 510-644-4256) have come from all over the country, offering everything from kind words to checks. But it's going to take a lot more effort than a couple of part-timers on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay can generate to get this project rolling. □

Vice in the Mainstream

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH SEX AND VIOLENCE

Pornography may be here to stay.
Ask Tipper Gore.

WALTER BERNS

MANY years ago, at a supper club in Chicago, I asked a waiter (decked out, as I recall, like some character from the *Arabian Nights*) why they served their steaks on flaming swords. "Simple," he replied. "The customers like it and it doesn't hurt the meat."

I thought of this recently as I watched a Senate committee solemnly (but less flamboyantly) respond to complaints from its customers, a few angry parents, by serving up what it would have them believe is a solution to the problem of violence on prime-time television. Prohibiting or somehow regulating it was, of course, out of the question. The senators had it on the authority of Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, that government has no business prescribing "what people read, listen to, or watch." Thus, rather than allow the networks to take the high ground by invoking the First Amendment, Senator Paul Simon (D., Ill.) and his fellow committee members accepted a promise from the network executives to attach warning labels to their products, labels similar to those attached to cigarettes and sex films: "ATTORNEY GENERAL'S WARNING: Mayhem may be bad for your body," or "Due to some violent content, parental discretion advised."

No one, surely, least of all the typical network executive, expects these labels to have any effect on the amount of violence now filling the television screens. The assumption behind "adults only" labels is that parents will do, and will want to do, what the law is reluctant or forbidden to do, but these assumptions are questionable at best. When the law is forbidden to make moral judgments—this because the Supreme Court effectively put the censors out of business some 25 or 30 years ago—it is foolish to think that parents will be able to enforce them, or even want to make them. Whatever the reason—whether out of indifference or a sense of helplessness—par-

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ents today seem to be content to allow the schools to take care of their children's behavior (which may explain why the new Surgeon General can call upon the schools to pass out condoms with the cookies) and they allow the market to fix their children's tastes in music, films, and entertainment generally.

Like Son, Like Father

IN FACT, it turns out that parents share those tastes. As the entertainment industry knows very well, adults (including lots of parents) have a taste not only for violence but for sex. Like their children, they enjoy it (vicariously, at least); they enjoy watching Madonna, for example. On stage, in films, and on videos, she bares her breasts, rubs her crotch, masturbates with bottles and animated statues of black saints (or, as Camille Paglia puts it with becoming delicacy, she "makes love" with them), and hops into bed with naked men while exclaiming about the size of their sexual organs. Not only children but millions of adults enjoy her act. And why not? She helps them "get in touch with their bodies," as they say. With their custom, she has become a star, a national celebrity; her face and figure appear on the covers of the respectable news magazines, and Jack Valenti brags about the fact that he once took her to lunch.

Parents who serve on juries today find nothing offensive in Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs (for example, of one man urinating into the mouth of another) or in rock lyrics that *their* parents would have been ashamed to listen to—or, because the judges then would have forbidden the lyrics to be put in evidence, would not have been allowed to listen to. ("Some respect must be paid to the purity of our records," the judges used to say.) For example, a recent Florida jury found nothing offensive in violent—but rhythmic, very rhythmic—accounts of men amusing themselves by grabbing women by the hair, breaking their backs, and tearing open their, well, vaginas. "Representing a cross-section of the community as we do," declared the jury foreman (a member of the Key Biscayne Presbyterian Church choir), "the lyrics were just not obscene." On the contrary, they were said to have "artistic value."

Parents (and not only those who sang in church choirs) used to educate by instilling a sense of shame in their children. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" a mother would say by way of admonishing her child for an act done or left undone. Except perhaps among recent immigrants ("*¿No estas avergonzado de ti mismo?*"), I doubt that such admonitions are much uttered today, which is just as well because they would carry little weight.

Too much has gone on—or, thanks to the ACLU and the Supreme Court, too much has come off—since Chicago schoolboys, for example, would sneak down to the Star and Garter Theater (corner of State and Van Buren Streets), where, in the company of a large number of dirty old men, they could watch some not particularly attractive women slowly and artfully remove their outer clothing and, at the end, reveal, at a minimum, what are called their pasties and G-strings. The Star and Garter was what used to be called a "sleazy" joint, and those who gave it their custom were supposed to be ashamed to be seen in it or to be known to patronize it. It was tolerated, more or less, but, unlike the rock and rap concerts and Madonna's performances, it was not licensed or sanctioned by the law. On the contrary, citing one or another city ordinance, the police would occasionally raid the place and close it down for a while, which had the desired effect of reinforcing that sense of shame by reminding its patrons of its illicit character.

If there are few such places today it is not because the police have shut them down but because the striptease has given way to new forms of "dancing," the topless and then the nude. This new dancing is not confined to sleazy establishments; according to newspaper accounts, the clubs in Atlanta especially are "big, expensive, and clean, and they cater to yuppies." Unlike those at the old Star and Garter, their dancers are yuppies too, or aspiring yuppies, college girls in fact. As Sasha, one of the dancers, said: "I have undergraduate degrees in chemistry and marketing, and I'm going to law school in the fall and I hope this will pay for it." Sasha (her real name is probably Katherine Anne, or Mary Elizabeth) wears glasses when she dances—except for the stiletto heels, that's all she wears—but they're fake,

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she admits. "When I wear them, I become a secretary, a librarian; I've cornered the intellectual market here."

According to the Georgia Hospitality and Travel Association, these clubs contribute as much as $3 million to the city's economy each year in taxes and license fees. As one club owner put it, Atlanta has become a "debutante city with urbane pretensions," and, as such, it no longer considers nude dancing (and the taste for it) something to hide or be ashamed of. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, that most democratic of political philosophers, was obviously correct when he said, some two hundred years ago, that "vice hardly insinuates itself by shocking decency, but by taking on its likeness." Correct and, as these various examples demonstrate, prescient: in today's "urbane" America nothing is seen as vice because everything, at least everything connected with sex, is seen as decent.

One Man's Vice . . .

OF COURSE, there are still people who profess to be shocked by Madonna and our other entertainers. But, to paraphrase only slightly a remark made a few years ago by Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan, we now realize that one man's vice—or as Mrs. Gore learned in 1988, one woman's pornography—is another's lyric.

Wife of a United States senator (at the time) and mother of four, Mary Elizabeth "Tipper" Gore mounted a campaign against the recording industry and its sexually explicit rock lyrics. She wrote a book about it, *Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society*, and called upon Congress to do something about the problem. For this she gained little or no public support; in fact, she was ridiculed in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, denounced by the American Civil Liberties Union, and called a "cultural terrorist" by rock star Frank Zappa.

Still, she might have persisted had her husband not mounted a campaign of his own, in his case for the Presidency. Knowing that any hint of Comstockery would, to say the least, jeopardize his chances for the Democratic Party's nomination—which, in itself,

An Expert Witness Disagrees

I RECENTLY was invited again to testify as an expert witness in a pornography trial. I declined. In the Sixties and Seventies I often testified, usually for the prosecution. I thought pornography not only offensive but harmful to the social fabric. Further, the crime-stimulating effect of pornography seemed likely to exceed any crime-replacing (cathartic) effects. Thus, the harm appeared to far outweigh the masturbatory pleasure that vicarious sex may yield, and I favored punishing purveyors. I have changed my mind. I no longer believe the actual harm is great enough to bother.

Though convinced now that I was wrong about the importance of pornography, I believe that my testimony was legally correct. The First Amendment protects speech—oral, written, or printed. Speech is a subclass of expression. The First Amendment does not mention, let alone protect, expression as a whole, or any subclasses other than speech, such as music, dance, painting, firecrackers, or "symbolic speech," defined as action (e.g., flag burning) meant to express an opinion by non-verbal means. Nevertheless, the Supreme Court has decided that the Constitution protects non-verbal as well as verbal expression. (Had the Framers meant to do so they would have said so. After all, non-verbal expressions were not unknown to them, nor was the term "expression.")

But, despite its latitudinarian interpretation, the Supreme Court (in a fairly muddled way) has refused to protect pornographic expression, probably because pornography by definition is intended not to convey information or opinion but to sexually arouse the purchaser. As an expert witness I was asked only to explain why, in my opinion, the materials before the court—usually pictorial magazines or movies—were or were not pornographic. They were, if they 1) predominantly appealed to the prurient interest of the average person, 2) lacked substantial political, scientific, literary, or artistic value, and 3) violated prevailing (local) community standards. Although they vary, there always are discernible minimum standards. The idea that courts cannot discover them, or discern gross violations, makes little sense. Attorneys who argue that courts cannot, do not argue with their genitals exposed. They seem to be quite able to discern prevailing standards.

Since the cases brought to trial involved mostly hard-core materials, I had no difficulty testifying that the criteria for pornography were met. Defense witnesses, often literary or art critics of some renown, usually would explain that the materials had great (though hidden) literary or artistic merit. They knew better. At least morally, they perjured themselves. They may have been motivated by opposition to any restriction of expression, which, they feared, ultimately might impinge on legitimate works of art. But their legal obligation was to testify truthfully to their opinion about the merits of the materials at issue. Their fears cannot justify pretending to find artistic or literary value in the hard-core materials before the court. Belief in a slippery-slope theory of impending "censorship" does not justify false testimony. Moreover, the slippery-slope theory is wrong. Throughout history it is the loss of political freedom which leads to a loss of artistic and literary freedom, never the other way around. Restrictions on pornography in a free society never have led to a loss of artistic, literary, or political freedom. Finally, censorship (prior restraint) has never been constitutional—although *post factum* punishment for distributing pornography always has been.

Defense experts often managed to confuse jurors who relied on them to distinguish art from pornography—which is why the prosecution had to call its own experts to counter them, even when *res ipsa loquitur* as clearly as can be. Sometimes defense

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speaks volumes—the two of them decided to go to Canossa, or the closest place to it in modern America, Hollywood, where they met "privately with entertainment leaders to discuss [Mrs. Gore's] campaign against pornographic rock lyrics." Reached afterward in Chattanooga, she said that she now felt she had made a mistake, not by meeting with the record-industry executives, but by campaigning against pornography, and especially by making a big deal of it by testifying in a Senate hearing. By doing so, she said, she may "inadvertently [have given] encouragement to advocates of censorship." A couple of months later, during the height of the presidential primary season, she wrote a piece for the *New York Times* in which she reiterated her opposition to censorship. "I detest it," she said.

To appease her (without hurting the meat, so to speak), the companies placed a label—"Explicit Lyrics—Parental Advisory"—on their pornographic records, compact discs, and cassettes. The results could have been (and by the gleeful record companies probably were) predicted. The labels provided teenagers with a handy buying guide and, at the same time, advised their parents that they could spare themselves a lot of grief by pretending not to notice.

The conclusion, I think, is clear. The networks will fill our television screens with games—like the one featuring bare-breasted men (and soon women) batting volleyballs back and forth on a sandy beach—and, with or without warning labels, ever more violence and ever more sex. Our despised "Puritans" may object, but, like the chastened Tipper Gore, they will learn to live with this. They will have to, because, as Rousseau pointed out in another of his aphorisms, "Censorship can be useful for preserving morals, but never for re-establishing them."

It only remains to be seen whether a democracy can live without morals or, as the Founders of this country would have put the question, whether people can be trusted to govern others if, by acting on every impulse, sexual and otherwise, they prove incapable of governing themselves. Some of us might live long enough to learn the answer. □

experts would testify that pornographic materials had educational or therapeutic value. Yet, such value would have been irrelevant. The "substantial scientific value" which can protect otherwise pornographic materials is not the same as educational or therapeutic value. If pornography did help in treating patients it would not acquire scientific value, or become less pornographic or more legal. And if viewers were educated about sexual permutations they had not learned about before, pornography would not acquire scientific value either. Science discovers *new* knowledge; education only transmits, and therapy only uses, old knowledge. Thus, alleged educational or therapeutic benefits would have no bearing on the legality of pornographic materials.

I stopped testifying when it became clear to me that, despite victories in court, present laws cannot control pornography and that more effective laws are unlikely to be enacted. I also found that in many places public opinion has developed an almost unlimited tolerance of pornography. Let me turn then from the legal to the social aspects.

Provided it truly is private, I now do not think any consensual sexual activity, including discreet prostitution and pornography, should be regulated by the government. Although it is not constitutionally protected, I can no longer see any compelling reason for governmental control. Obtrusive public offering, let alone advertising, is a different matter. It may offend non-consenting persons and pollute the atmosphere for them.

I used to think that pornography is harmful even when privately consumed, because it dehumanizes. Men can experience sex independently of any personal relationship—prostitution would not be possible otherwise; nor would pornography. But I thought the pornographic celebration of the separation between sensation and emotion to be socially dangerous. While pre-Christian societies seldom regulated pornography or prostitution, Christian societies did, because impersonal sex was seen as inconsistent with the uniqueness of the individual and the human dignity cultivated, if not invented, by Christianity. However secularized, individuality still is a paramount Western value; pornography still undermines it, for the pornographic celebration of impersonal sex is possible only when sex objects, the sexual act, and the participants are perceived as fungible. Pornography indeed invites men to treat all women as mere fungible means to sexual gratification, not as persons. Communism and Nazism too reduced individuals to mere means, dehumanizing them altogether when they belonged to the wrong class or race. I felt that pornography fosters that same dismal and anti-human spirit.

It does not follow, however, that we must prohibit pornography. We do not actually prohibit Communist or Nazi propaganda either. History demonstrates that, when tolerated, pornography and prostitution tend to be contained. Neither seems likely to seriously damage the social fabric. To be sure, pornography fans may think of others as interchangeable and available for impersonal sex, or savor its depiction. (They won't lead very happy lives.) But they remain rather few. Non-fans occasionally join out of curiosity but seldom stay. For most people pornography is no more damaging, or habit forming, than coffee.

Possibly pornography abets some sex crimes. But those disposed to them may also be inclined to consume pornography as an effect, not a cause, of their pre-existing criminal disposition. More important, if there is a disposition to sex crimes, an almost infinite variety of things may trigger the criminal action. A rapist does not need pornography. The sight of a woman, or even of an advertisement for lingerie, may be enough. There is no way to eliminate stimuli and no reason to believe that pornography is indispensable to sex crimes or sufficiently causative to justify controlling it.

—Ernest van den Haag

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

October 8, 1993

Dear Rusty,

I've got to admit that your last letter really ticked me off. Just because Bill and I support NAFTA doesn't mean we're not "true eco-warriors." I was down there in the Rain Forest with you. I was the one who had to get up at 3 A.M. and stir oatmeal to put on my thigh rash. It hurts when you question my commitment.

And since when is the Sierra Club a "tool of big oil"? Al Jr. and I have been on dozens of Sierra Club outings, Rusty. Some were just picnics, sure, but a lot of others were overnight camp-outs and hikes and so forth. Al Jr. saved his pennies just to pay for his very own Junior Level Sierra Club membership. Are you calling him a "flunky for the oil cartels"?

I don't understand you, Rusty. NAFTA is essential for the country's economic growth. I agree that the side agreements aren't strong enough; I agree the EPA is the least effective environmental organization we've got—they can't even get the 65-miles-per-gallon rule into law. But sometimes you've got to compromise. Prosperity in Mexico won't hurt the environment. It'll just . . . scuff it up a bit.

Okay, I'm done now. I feel better. If you agree with Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot, okay, that's that, we agree to disagree. What's friendship without a little disagreement? Case closed. Time to move on.

What really bugged me was when you called me "gullible." That's my Achilles' heel. As a child, I believed whatever I was told. When my mother told me we didn't give the servants Christmas Day off because "Negroes celebrate Christmas on a different day," I believed her. When my father told me St. Alban's School didn't have any Jewish boys in it because "if Jews go anywhere named after a saint, they get excommunicated from the Jewish religion," I believed him. And when scientists predicted an approaching ice age, I believed them too.

So your words got under my skin. In fact, right after I read your letter, I ducked out of my office, pulled up the collar on my jacket, and went for a long walk. To be perfectly honest, I was feeling sorry for myself: just mention reinventing government to someone and watch their eyes glaze over—it's all health care, health care, health care, these days; and worse, my pal Rusty had just lambasted me for my support of NAFTA, even calling me "gullible."

As I passed the Hay-Adams Hotel, I wasn't looking where I was going and a huge, super-stretch limousine screeched to a halt in front of me. The driver leaned out to yell, recognized me, and stopped mid-obscenity. Then out popped Ron Brown, the Secretary of Commerce!

"Al? What are you doing out without your car and driver and security?" he asked.

"Oh, I guess I just needed some fresh air."

"But you're entitled to those perks. You're a G-7 or higher."

"Yeah, but I just—"

"Get in. Let's go for a drive."

The limo glided out of the Hay-Adams circle and headed up K Street. The interior of the car was spectacular. A full wet-bar, plush velour; I counted five phones. Ron leaned back and smiled. "Like it?"

I nodded.

"Yeah, it's something," he continued. "And it wasn't cheap. But as Secretary of Transportation, I need what is essentially a mobile office."

"But I thought you were Secretary of Commerce."

"Whatever."

"Wait a minute, Ron. Are you saying the Department is paying for this car?"

Ron looked at me for a moment. Then, he tilted his head to one side and said: "I have a bad back."

"Oh," I said.

Ron looked uncomfortable—probably his back—so I changed tack: "What was on at the Hay-Adams?"

"Fundraiser," Ron said.

"Big crowd?" I asked.

"Not really," he answered. "Just three of us. But that's not important. What were you doing out, Al?"

"Well, Ron, the whole thing's really about NAFTA."

"About what?"

"NAFTA."

"I'm drawing a blank here, Al. Help me out."

So I explained about the letter and your concerns. He seemed really sympathetic. Before I knew it, we had pulled up in front of my house. I was halfway out of the limo when Ron grabbed my arm. "Hey, Al," he said, "I wonder if I could ask you a big favor. I went out and bought a really great present for my wife"—he tapped a large attaché case lying next to him—"and I was wondering if you could hold it for a while. I can count on you to keep it a secret?"

"Of course you can, Ron," I said. I grabbed the case, and headed up the walkway to the house. It was empty. I started to feel that gloomy, sorry-for-myself feeling, but then I caught sight of Ron's attaché case, and I thought to myself, hey, how bad could it be? I did a friend a favor today. And I snapped out of it.

your pal, Al

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Kiss Me, Cate

ROGER SCRUTON

I READ *Only Words* with horrified amazement—at the thing against which Professor MacKinnon rails, and at the manner of her railing. I knew in outline of the American culture of pornography, and was familiar from her other writings with Miss MacKinnon's hate-intoxicated style. But never had I guessed at the relation between them—the magnetic force with which pornography grips the feminist imagination, and the reckless obsession that results from this. Here, in 150 relentless pages, are the two most degrading of present-day America's sins against the spirit: pornography and misandry. Miss MacKinnon's diatribe is a vivid instance of what she condemns, a dirtying of life and love that deploys all the dehumanizing tricks of the pornographer, blocking out the soul with the hate-filled image of the body. I fully agree with her that pornography should be banned; and there is no better candidate for the bonfire than this book.

It would never have occurred to earlier generations of Americans that the Constitution could be used to forbid the expression of opinions judged "offensive" by a self-chosen elite, or to permit the propagation of material that is offensive to everyone. It went without saying that the First Amendment exists in order to protect free discussion of matters of public concern, not to permit the wholesale distribution of pornographic images which contribute to the free discussion of nothing. Yet today the United States is perhaps the only country in the civilized world where quite reasonable opinions about matters of the greatest importance—such as race and sexuality—cannot be expressed without risk of legal or disciplinary action. And it is one of the few countries where access to pornography of a kind that beggars all description, save that bestowed on it by Miss MacKinnon, is regarded as a constitutional "right."

Only Words, by Catharine A. MacKinnon (Harvard, 152 pp., $14.95)

Mr. Scruton is a University Professor at Boston University.

Various factors have contributed to the rise of pornocracy in America. One is the effect of liberal activism on the judicial process. It is now widely supposed that the Constitution does not mean what the Founding Fathers intended it to mean, still less what the reasonable citizen would understand it to mean. The Constitution means what the liberal jurists decide—which is to say, whatever offers the greatest offense to the moral majority. It is vain to show that pornography is not speech in the sense intended by the First Amendment, vain to show that it is intrinsically degrading and pleases precisely because it degrades, vain to show that neither the Founders nor their successors would have had the slightest desire to permit it, vain to show that the law depends upon a tacit respect for decency which, if too much provoked, will bring about the end of constitutional government. The liberal establishment has decided that pornography is so offensive to the conservative conscience that it must at all costs be protected by law. Pornography has therefore been defined as "speech" for the purpose of the First Amendment, just as words used to express conservative opinions have been defined as "discrimination" for the purpose of the Fourteenth.

Roberto Parada

Pornography would never have enjoyed the protection of the law, however, without the influence of another force: the sexual liberation of the Sixties, which entirely changed the language in which our most important experiences are discussed. We no longer "make love": instead we "have sex," and the idiom is already pornographic, a deliberate denial of the personal bond and a focusing on the body and its functions. Sexual behavior is described with a medicinal explicitness that removes the air of shame and mystery. Reduced to a bodily sensation, desire is emancipated from morality, and placed on display in the supermarket of pleasure. Pornography merely reinforces the view of sexual love that is now official. It is a direct avenue to the common goal: namely, the avoidance of love.

In a pornocracy everything disappears that makes it possible for women to trust men, or for men to leave the sexual playground. With the abolition of shame, modesty, hesitation, and innocence there is no longer the necessary barrier between the sexes. That which should be breached by love is first eaten away by curiosity. Sexual desire was once a maturing force, which lifted the adolescent from the world of self-centered pleasure and prepared him for a true commitment. Now it scarcely deserves the name "desire," being a routine in which the other need be no more than a partner. The individual is no longer the object of desire; for desire has been generalized, and redefined as a bodily function. Pornography displays this transformation; but it is endorsed by almost every self-appointed "sexologist" in America, from Alfred Kinsey to Richard Posner.

It is hardly surprising that women should be enraged by pornography. For the reduction of sex to a commod-

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ity jeopardizes everything that gives a woman confidence in her sexual feelings: love, commitment, marriage, and an enduring father to her children. The intemperate fury of the American feminist conveys the heartbroken recognition that those things are no longer available except on temporary loan to the very attractive. The result is a hatred of men that knows no bounds, together with an urgent desire to warn against the common enemy. To this end activists such as Karen Hall, Andrea Dworkin, and Catharine MacKinnon are at work on every campus, instilling into the minds of young women the thought that men are rapists, that a sexual advance is the first step toward a violation, and that women are at best the "survivors" of an encounter which they will certainly not enjoy. That which to an outside observer might appear comic—the code being enforced at Antioch College, for instance—is in reality a tragedy of the highest order. For it shows how far the trust between man and woman has been destroyed, and how difficult it will be for the next generation to achieve the only known form of human happiness.

Whether Hell knows a fury greater than Catharine MacKinnon I cannot say. But *Only Words* surely goes as far in the direction of inciting hatred toward its target as is legally possible. Spitting out obscenities, and crowding her pages with pornographic descriptions of men at work, she implies that only a thin veil of prohibition arrests my desire to rape, torture, humiliate, and dismember the next woman who catches my eye. Her frequent descriptions of the sexual act are as impersonal, violent, and reifying as the pornography she condemns, and the assumption throughout is that there is not a man on earth who would really trouble himself to gain a woman's consent, did not the law require it. The last time I encountered group libel of this kind was in a recent showing in Poland of the film *Jew Süss*, made at Goebbels's instigation in order to fan the flames of anti-Semitism. All I can say is that *Jew Süss* was mild by comparison.

The book has other weaknesses, besides its moral depravity. The first is Miss MacKinnon's assumption that only women are victims of pornography: yet men too are victims when, as she puts it in a rare moment of poetry, "that which should be given is stolen and sold." Her ideologically motivated bias leads to a nonsensical definition of pornography—a definition that is none the better for having been worked out in conjunction with Andrea Dworkin and passed through the Illinois legislature (though not through the Supreme Court). According to Miss MacKinnon, pornography consists in "graphic sexually explicit materials that subordinate women through pictures or words." It says a lot about America that a high-ranking academic jurist can propose a law that forbids the degradation of women while allowing that of men. Does she really imagine that there is no pornography in which *men* are bound and humiliated, whether by other men or by punitive females? It could be that images of the sexual degradation of men have a certain appeal for her. Nevertheless, it shows intellectual as well as moral blindness not to recognize that they are part of the phenomenon that she seeks to outlaw.

The second weakness is revealed most clearly in the last of the three essays in the book, devoted to the concept of free speech. It is permissible not to mention Spinoza, Locke, Mill, Stephen, and Berlin, but surely not to write as though they had never existed. Miss MacKinnon seems not to have thought about this issue until her encounter with pornography. She writes as though nobody had ever argued that freedom of speech does not include the freedom to shout "fire" in a crowded theater, and as though the attempt had never been made to distinguish the legitimate expression of unpopular views from the seditious fanning of emotion. This suggests a cavernous ignorance not only of philosophical literature, but also of English common law.

Through the dim fog of her discussion I came to see that she is not really interested in freedom at all, except insofar as it is the enemy of the chimerical sexual equality that she desires. The age-old conflict between freedom and equality (between the First and the Fourteenth Amendments) erupts into her prose with all the more vigor in that she is not truly aware of it. All she can see is the need to remove speech from the dominant sex, so that the victim can be heard: "the less speech you have, the more the speech of those who have it keeps you unequal; the more the speech of the dominant is protected, the more dominant they become and the less the subordinated are heard from." Here you have it in a nutshell: the old *marxisant* excuse for oppressing the class enemy. For Miss MacKinnon the relation between man and woman is one of war. Love, courtship, and marriage are at best the ideology of male domination; the *reality* is rape. The battle against pornography is not fought in order to restore the bond between woman and man: after all, "bond" means bondage. The battle is against men as such, and if the moral order is destroyed in the course of it, so much the worse for the moral order. As she inimitably expresses the point: "How many women's bodies have to stack up here even to register against male profit and pleasure presented as First Amendment principle?"

If the battle against pornography is fought with prose like that, then it is already lost. □

Let's Make a Deal

BARRY FREUNDEL

AS PART of the macabre humor that rabbis use to express their fears of professional irrelevance, one story stands out from my days as a student. A young rabbi is called to his first pulpit and is asked by the synagogue's president for the intended subject of his first sermon. "Sabbath observance," he answers.

"That may not be a good idea," cautions the president. "Almost no one in our congregation stays home from work on Saturday."

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"Well, how about observance of dietary laws?" asks the rabbi.

"No, that won't work either," the president replies. "People here find such notions archaic."

"Well, then, what should I speak about?" asks the chastened clergyman.

Comes the immediate response: "Why, Judaism, of course!"

I'm sure members of other faiths tell, *mutatis mutandis*, the same story; and Stephen Carter, law professor at Yale University and a deeply religious person, shares the same concern. Religion has been marginalized and trivialized, he says. The dominant culture excludes religiously based arguments from public airing, not because of their content, but merely because they are religiously based. American jurisprudence has also conspired to make religion a matter of private personal choice—a "hobby," to use Mr. Carter's word—with no sustainable claim for respect or special accommodation. Most significant in Mr. Carter's view is the 1990 Supreme Court decision *Employment Division* v. *Smith*, in which the state of Oregon was allowed to retain legislation outlawing the smoking of peyote, even in American-Indian religious ceremonies. Prior to *Smith*, church–state issues were governed by the so-called *Lemon* test (for the 1971 decision *Lemon* v. *Kurtzman*), which prevented government from regulating religion except in cases of compelling interest and when no less intrusive solution could be found. With the decision in *Smith*, the operative criterion became whether particular legislation was designed to affect specific religious groups. Even-handed legislation that inadvertently harms a religion is thus no longer unconstitutional. As Mr. Carter sees it, this new relationship between church and state must inevitably damage the standing and functioning of all religions in this country.

The problems as he describes them are real, and ones with which many religious thinkers have grappled. But the solution of religious compromise that Mr. Carter suggests will find few advocates among serious Jews and Christians.

Stories about the trivialization of normative religion—its disintegration into varieties of feel-goodism—were prevalent when I was a student in the Sixties and Seventies, but they do not reflect the reality of American religion today. Though many religious Americans have left their churches and synagogues for more "liberal" options, or opted out altogether, those who have remained, and those significant numbers who have returned, want and practice a far more traditionally authentic religion than the one advocated by our synagogue president or by Stephen Carter. Trivialization may be the norm outside religious circles, but that is viewed by those inside the circles as a threat to be overcome, not as a problem to be solved by compromise.

Mr. Carter writes that "the religions for all their arrogance and sinfulness can often provide approaches to the consideration of ultimate questions that a world yet steeped in materialistic ideologies desperately requires." On the other hand, "religions are at their most useful when they serve as democratic intermediaries (independent moral voices interposed between the citizen and the state) and preach resistance. . . . The corollary, however, is ominous. The closer the religions move to the center of secular power (as against influence), the less likely they are to discover meanings that are in competition with those imposed by the state." Ultimately religion should challenge and question but not work for real change. It is this deal that Carter offers.

The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion, by Stephen L. Carter (Basic, 328 pp., $25)

Religionists, however, are seeking other solutions. It is clear from his book's last chapter that Mr. Carter has some sense of this. He acknowledges that the delegitimization of religion in public life, far from ensuring religion's demise, is creating a backlash that has led, among other things, to the Christian Coalition's winning control of Republican Party organizations in at least a dozen states. This development frightens Mr. Carter.

He is caught between his liberal political beliefs and his misunderstanding of how people who live by traditional religious principles function. He cannot bring himself to condemn all religious activism. He recognizes the debt owed to religion by the civil-

"Absolutely Heavenly"

Nika Hazleton, *NATIONAL REVIEW*, Jan 22, 1990
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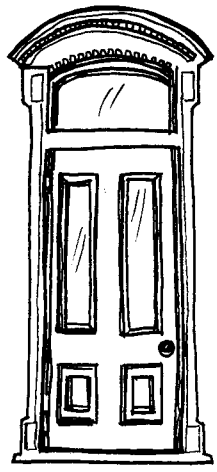
rights movement, and he wants religion to be a force in moral opposition to government. But he would like religion to keep out of those areas—such as abortion and gay rights—in which it threatens to violate today's prevailing, liberal cultural norms. So he will allow religion to argue and even to convince people that a fetus is a human being, but not to draw what he views as "wrong" public-policy conclusions from that belief. As he puts it, the "right to choose abortion . . . must be based on an approach that allows abortion *even if* the fetus is human." Religion, as that synagogue president would agree, is to produce pious sentiments, but only insofar as those sentiments are without practical consequences.



The danger in this for religion is obvious. Were it to take Stephen Carter's advice, theology would find itself in constant retreat before every immoral challenge that arose. Mr. Carter supports his call for religious self-emasculation by arguing that religion is corrupted by power and functions best when it removes itself from politics. Yet the early civil-rights movement, of which he approves, was nothing if not a grab for political power.

Mr. Carter is also guilty here and throughout the book of describing religion in terms of political power which are foreign to religion's understanding of itself. "Religions," he writes, "are in effect independent centers of power." Absent from this description are the ontological and existential dimensions central to religious self-perception. If religion is not about the search for truth—an ultimate truth which supersedes the claims of everyday politics—what is the point of religion?

Mr. Carter attempts to sweeten his proposal by offering something in return. He promises public respect for religious expression, greater accommodation of religious practice, exemption of religious students from "objectionable" school programs, and maybe even vouchers and government support for secular activities in religious schools. Along the way he manages to offer the survival of the State of Israel as a tradeoff for religious support of (or at least non-opposition to) affirmative-action programs.

He should be aware that most of the community to which he makes this offer will find it demeaning if not thoroughly insulting. Trading the sacred for short-term partial accommodation is an option that all religious faiths rigorously and regularly condemn.

In making his case for such a deal, Mr. Carter is at least consistent. He says: "What has happened in the way of marginalizing religion can be captured in one word: abortion." He sees the origins of today's religious marginalization in religious organizations' public opposition to abortion, and the secularist response to that opposition. This incursion by believers—the Moral Majority and others—into the public-policy arena, he argues, led them to advocate many other uncomfortable public-policy positions in domestic and foreign affairs, and consequently led to the further marginalization of religion.

But in this, as in much of his historical analysis, Mr. Carter is simply incorrect. Madalyn Murray O'Hair and her atheist associates succeeded in removing the Bible and prayer from the schools fully a decade before *Roe* v. *Wade*, and legal decisions of that type can be found throughout the entire ten years that followed her "triumph." Even the case that enshrined the *Lemon* test—which forbade the government to pay for secular textbooks or offer similar secular assistance to religious schools—came in 1971, two years before *Roe*. Indeed *Roe* was very much a climax in, and not the beginning of, the marginalization of religion. It was only after a decade of major losses of this type that the Religious Right began to mobilize. In another context, Stephen Carter's "history" would rightly be called "blaming the victim."

Mr. Carter is correct in condemning religious thinkers who make their beliefs the handmaiden of their politics. "Matters become troublesome," he writes, "when one's theology always ends up squaring precisely with one's politics." Those who start with their political conclusions and then seek support in authoritative sources do religion a disservice. I have often marveled that, in their political pronouncements, Jesse Jackson and Pat Robertson can claim to speak from the same religious tradition.

But Mr. Carter's analysis of this phenomenon is at best superficial. He is right to point out that there was never a religious basis—as some claimed—on which to declare the Soviet Union worthy of détente, or for that matter on which to declare SDI a moral imperative. Both positions involve political judgments not sustainable by religious texts. On the other hand, abortion and gay rights are very different types of concerns. The Catholic or Jewish (which is significantly different) stance on abortion is not a matter of politics or political judgment. These positions embody eternal values and begin from a religious judgment as to when life begins or when it can make a claim for protection under God. In the same way, the acceptance of homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle is not within the purview of authentic traditional religions, and Mr. Carter is fooling himself by suggesting it is. While religious thinkers should be more careful about making political judgments a part of their spiritual and moral declarations, religion cannot be silent on issues that are matters of the spirit and morality and at the same time expect to retain its authenticity.

This last, I would say, is the true source of religious marginalization. The moral revolution of the Sixties and its aftermath created a culture that worships radical autonomy and shuns any authority other than one's own conscience. Normative religion is, by definition, at odds with this world view. It will ever be so. No Faustian deal will avoid this clash of values. Mr. Carter himself points out that issues of procreation and marriage are at the heart of the religious contretemps. Given the focus of the Sixties moral revolution, this is exactly what one would expect to happen.

Mr. Carter must also be challenged on his egregious stereotyping of religious people. He claims that religionists do not use the same reasoning methods as secularists do. "Religion is really an alien way of knowing the world—alien, at least, in a political and legal culture in which reason supposedly rules," he says. In one sweep Mr. Carter thus denies the rationalist tradition of Aquinas, Maimonides,

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Averroës, and their vast number of modern expositors. While the rationalist religious tradition begins with a belief in God that secularism lacks, from that point the debate is joined on identical grounds and using the same rules of logical argumentation. Once one understands that belief in the efficacy of the scientific method to reveal moral truth is as much a leap of faith as belief in God, secularist and religionist epistemologies are revealed as functionally equivalent. By claiming that religionists don't think the same way secularists do, Mr. Carter can put religionists wherever he wants them.

Further, modern multiculturalists accept without question that blacks, women, and gays think differently—i.e., have different epistemologies—from white males. They argue for full inclusion on this basis, not for exclusion. Since Mr. Carter accepts the multiculturalist argument, the fact that he is only partially willing to include religion in the public square seems to indicate a marked subconscious bias against religion on his part.

Similar stereotypes occur in Mr. Carter's ritual bashing of Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Oliver North (who Carter is not sure acted out of religious conviction, but he deserves opprobrium anyway), and the 1992 Republican Convention. He also claims that no meaningful dialogue may be had with religionists, and that religionists can't evaluate their beliefs critically. He equates the media and academic culture with the American mainstream, and he is unable to distinguish between cults and religions. All of this is evidence of less than profound thinking.

His formulaic description of the historical evils perpetrated by religion is troubling for the same reason. He never acknowledges the internal contradictions that religious morality has with its own destructive behavior. Such contradictions have led to great acts of moral heroism on the part of religionists in the name of religion, even when powerful practitioners of the same religious tradition have been engaged in massive acts of persecution. No such moral contradictions ever confronted Stalin or Hitler when their secular ideologies led them to the atrocities they perpetrated.

Attributing secular society's suspicion of religion to this blood-stained history, as Mr. Carter does, reveals further superficial analysis. If a history of atrocities necessarily leads to marginalization, socialism should be the most reviled institution on the face of the earth, particularly by those with the "moral sensitivity" to be suspicious of religion on such grounds. As this is obviously not the case, discomfort with religion must emanate from somewhere else.

Equally disturbing, but reflective of opinions regularly proclaimed by academics, is Mr. Carter's claim that pagan cultures were more tolerant than monotheistic ones. According to his account, in a multi-god society no one cared if the group in the next valley worshipped different gods. It is the Judaeo-Christian and Islamic claim of universality that creates problems. However, Mr. Carter fails to mention the pagan world's record of barbarism—a record much more impressive than that of any Western religion. This should not be surprising. For, if there is no universal recourse to a shared set of moral principles, the people in the next valley have no claim on my concern: after all, my god takes no notice of them, and may well be in competition with their god. I will therefore, the pagan reasons, be doing sacred work by eradicating them as thoroughly as possible.

Most painful is Mr. Carter's subtle insinuation of racism in his account of the Supreme Court's troubling decision in *Employment Division* v. *Smith*. Mr. Carter claims that the *Lemon* test was overturned only because the case involved a racial minority, American Indians, and their unconventional beliefs about peyote. Mr. Carter can only maintain his position by avoiding the dozens of cases subsequent to *Smith* that, in citing *Smith*, have negatively affected many "mainstream" religions. The Court has had ample opportunity to back down from this reading of *Smith* and has been unwilling to do so. Carter mentions none of this legal history. In fact, a reader would think that the *Lemon* test continues to hold sway and that *Smith*-like decisions appear only when marginal groups are at risk. Even a casual scholar of the Court should know that this is not the case.

Mr. Carter's book gained notoriety when it was read and cited favorably

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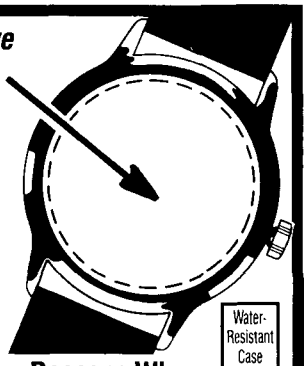

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by President Clinton. The President had convened a prayer breakfast for one hundred religious leaders from around the country, to reaffirm his belief that religion must be brought back into the public square. Ironically the breakfast embodied many of the unfortunate tendencies to be found in this book. No fundamentalist or identifiably right-wing denomination or thinker was invited, and Mr. Clinton used the occasion to repeat Mr. Carter's claims that anti-abortion advocacy caused the marginalization of religion. Stephen Carter's Faustian deal is not more attractive coming from the White House than it was coming from Yale Law School.

The Talmud tells of a rabbinic applicant sent to a town to explore becoming its rabbi. He was seated on a high platform and asked to preach, whereupon he refused the position. When asked by his teacher why he had refused, he answered that the populace wanted him on a pedestal, but did not want him actually to have an impact on their lives. Mr. Carter offers the same deal. It should and will be rejected. □

The Wealth of Nationalisms

NOEL MALCOLM

LIBERALS have never really known what to do about nationalism. Their general rule seems to be: when in doubt (which they usually are), denounce it. In their eyes it is something murky, primordial, and sinful, like sex or violence, which if it cannot be eliminated altogether must at least be kept under control. Part of the litany of liberal dinner conversation for the last three or four years has been the claim that, whatever you may say about Communism in Eastern Europe, you have to admit that it did at least keep nationalism in check. Now, according to the standard metaphor cliché, the lid has been taken off the cauldron, and all the ancient nationalistic hatreds are bubbling to the surface again.

Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, by Liah Greenfeld (Harvard, 581 pp., $49.95)

Meanwhile in Western Europe the bogey status of nationalism is put to good use by those liberals who have the creation of a European federal state on their agenda. If a hundred teenagers demonstrate in a London suburb against the growth of the Bangladeshi immigrant population there, this is treated as evidence that Britain is succumbing to the terrible disease of "nationalism." The cure for this disease, we are told, is to remove the power of self-government from the British people and transfer it to a European government in Brussels. (Why putting people under foreign government should be regarded as a way of making them less resentful of foreigners is never explained.) Anyone who wants to preserve the British (or French, etc.) state as a self-governing entity can also be accused of nationalism: he is then immediately identified as belonging to the forces of evil, in a Manichaean battle between enlightenment and primeval darkness. As Bruce Ackerman typically puts it in his recent book, *The Future of Liberal Revolution*, "the danger" of "resurgent nationalism" is "the central challenge for liberals in Western Europe." The epic battle of our times, in Professor Ackerman's view, is "the Western struggle between liberal federalism and retrograde nationalism."

There are two different sorts of answers that need to be given to these vapid but plausible claims. The first is historical: nationalism has taken many differing forms at various times and in various countries, and only the differing histories of those countries will explain why any nationalism has the particular qualities it possesses. Just taking the most objectionable features of some nationalisms, such as intolerance or aggression, and treating them as if they were the universal essence of nationalism as such, explains nothing. That is like taking the intolerance of, say, Iranian fundamentalists as the essence of religion. The nationalism of a British Conservative may differ as much from the nationalism of a Bosnian Serb gunman as the religion of an Anglican vicar differs from the religion of an Iranian imam: they have different contents, different histories. And, by the way, one need not spend very long looking at the history of nationalism in Eastern Europe to notice that much of its present belligerence and brutality was actually created, not suppressed, by Communist policies.

The second type of answer to the liberal attack on nationalism is to point out that nationalism can and does have a moral and political value. Most of us felt this in our bones when we watched the peoples of Eastern Europe throwing off the last vestiges of Soviet control and reinstating the national and religious symbols of their own history. Liberals who are quick to assert the communal rights of minorities are curiously slow to recognize that membership in a nation may also convey some rights which are infringed when national identity is suppressed by political structures.

At the very least, the sense of national identity has been a useful part of the machinery of modern democracy: some basis of fellow feeling is required if any numerical minority is to feel content with the decision of the majority. John Stuart Mill argued that representative government was impossible "among a people without fellow feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages," and he thought it advisable that "the boundaries of the government coincide in the main with those of nationalities." This respect for the nation-state is a rather neglected part of the liberal tradition (liberal in the philosophical sense, that is); it has been touched on by writers such as Michael Walzer, however, and it is explored in an important recent book, Yael Tumir's *Liberal Nationalism.*

Liah Greenfeld's *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* seems at first sight to combine the two lines of defense which I have just described. It offers a sequence of detailed historical studies of the origins and growth of nationalism in five countries: England, France, Russia, Germany, and the United States. In each case, as Professor Greenfeld shows, the nationalism served a different purpose and acquired a different set of contents. No

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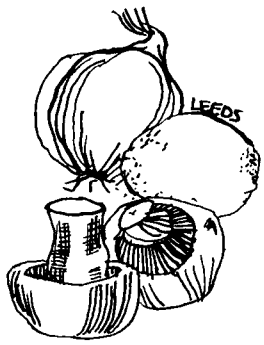
one, after reading this book, could possibly join in the kind of liberal chatter which describes nationalism as a universal force which just "flares up," like violence, here, there, and everywhere.

While Liah Greenfeld emphasizes the diversity of different nationalisms, she also insists on the one common feature of these five cases: the role of nationalism in making democratic politics possible. "The location of sovereignty within the people," she writes, "and the recognition of the fundamental equality among its various strata, which constitute the essence of the modern national idea, are at the same time the basic tenets of democracy. Democracy was born with the sense of nationality. The two are inherently linked, and neither can be fully understood apart from this connection."



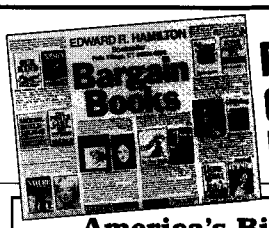
That sounds like an extremely strong claim. But Professor Greenfeld is a sociologist, which means that nothing is quite as strong as it seems. She is not in fact making a philosophical connection between nationalism and democracy, although she may think she is doing so. What she means here, as the five case studies in her book amply show, is that the same set of sociological conditions gave rise both to the growth of nationalism and to the growth of democratic politics.

The mechanism in each case involved a shift from a kind of society in which people identified with their social class or "estate" to one in which they identified with their "nation." Professor Greenfeld's idea is that in each country there was one particular opinion-forming class which brought this transformation about, in an attempt either to defend or to aggrandize its own position by identifying its own interests with those of the country as a whole. In most cases it was an upper social class which performed the transformation: "The Russian elite," for example, "was attracted to national identity because this identity could provide it with the basis for status and self-esteem that noble identity failed to provide."

Professor Greenfeld makes a good case for this argument in at least three out of her five countries (France, Germany, and Russia). But the more thoroughly she expounds the argument, the more one wonders whether this kind of sociological reductionism explains anything at all. National identity and its Siamese twin, democratic politics, turn out to be nothing more than the products of an ideological trick played in each case by a disgruntled class of minor noblemen or intellectuals. If that is so, one wants to know, why was the trick so hugely successful? It is not enough to show why it was in some people's interests to promote the doctrine of "the nation"; one must also show why all the other people in the country were so apt to believe it.

There is, I suspect, a whole range of objective historical factors which need to be given more weight in the argument. Professor Greenfeld says very little, for instance, about the role of war in making people identify themselves as members of a nation. Curiously little too is said about language: she tends to treat nations as purely socio-political constructs, in which the ingredients of linguistic or ethnic identity are mere optional extras. Her prize specimen here is the United States, which from an early stage had a national identity but not an ethnic one; yet it is surely difficult to imagine the United States developing "nationality" as it did without a national language. Would Lincoln's arguments have sounded so convincing if the whole Southern population had spoken a separate language?

So this book supplies some, but not enough, of the materials for the defense of nationalism against the liberal attack. It reminds us that different nationalisms have different histories, but it makes those histories seem contingent, almost accidental, and it downplays some of the major factors which drew people toward nationhood in modern European history. And although it points to a connection between nationhood and democracy, it does so only by making democracy itself seem the contingent product of diverted class interest. "National" is one of the most resonant adjectives in our political vocabulary, because the nation is a locus of real values. Somehow *Diverted Class Interest Review* just wouldn't sound the same. □



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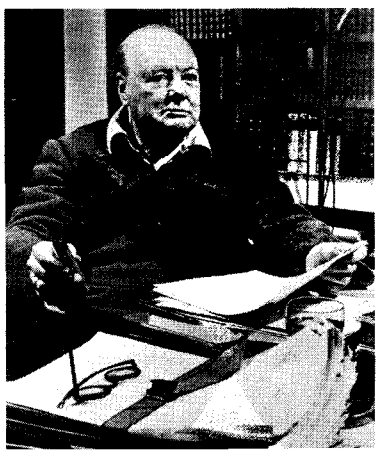

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Danger Ahead

RICHARD J. HERRNSTEIN

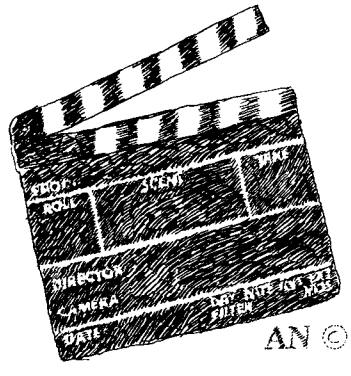
AMERICA has never been notably law abiding, but crime now worries ordinary citizens a lot. They are not worrying needlessly. In 1990, over 14 million *serious* crimes were reported to law-enforcement agencies around the nation. That comes to almost thirty serious crimes reported per minute. And reported crimes are just the tip of an iceberg of illegality ranging from malevolent to annoying—from killing and maiming to stealing and raping to the defacing of public surfaces.

Crime and Punishment in American History, by Lawrence M. Friedman (Basic, 577 pp., $30)

The forces of law and order collared almost 3 million suspects in 1990 for those serious crimes and about 14 million criminal suspects in total (excluding any for traffic violations). Residential real estate may be depressed in the rest of the economy; in our penal system it is booming. American prisons in each year in the 1980s needed to find, *weekly*, no fewer than 440 (in 1983) new beds and as many as 1,550 (in 1989). About half of 1 per cent (i.e., over 1.1 million) of our fellow inhabitants of America were in prison on a typical day in 1990, two-thirds of them in state and federal prisons, and of these, over 95 per cent were serving sentences longer than a year—for crimes of some gravity, in other words. This half of 1 per cent, of course, includes none of the felons on the loose, committing crimes. It is hard to say just how much crime in general has increased in America during the twentieth century, but criminal homicide has risen by about 600 per cent per capita, with almost a decade to go. There is so much of it in some parts of the country that it has become *the* premier public-health problem: murder exacts a greater cost in lost life expectancy in those places than disease or accidents. For all we know, other crimes have risen even more.

People who theorize about the reasons for crime disagree about almost everything, including what it is that needs to be explained. One old and enduring argument boils down to whether you think you need to explain the crimes people commit or the crimes they do not commit. Are people law-abiding until society warps them, as Rousseau, for example, argued? Are they determined to make one another's lives poor, nasty, brutish, and short until they are tamed by a government and its laws, as Hobbes said? The modern-day Rousseauvians are the liberals who say that the "root causes" of crime are the inequities, oppressions, and cruelties of society. The Hobbesians are the conservatives who say that we have so much crime because we are failing to tame the savage beast in us all. Rousseau and Hobbes would explain the rising crime in America rather differently.

The first several hundred pages of Stanford law professor Lawrence Friedman's engrossing and rich book about the history and the current state of criminal justice in America is firmly anchored on the liberal side of most issues on crime. A Hobbesian twist at its conclusion sets it apart, however, and is mainly what makes it as notable as it is.



According to liberal orthodoxy, the criminal-justice system serves the haves at the expense of the have-nots. Friedman sounds the theme early and often: "The rich and powerful, the articulate, the well positioned, have many more 'votes' on matters of definition [of crime] than the poor, the weak, the silent." Or, a few pages later: "Groups that dominate society display their power most brutally and nakedly in police patrols, riot squads, and prisons, but power expresses itself also in the penal codes and in the process of labeling some values and behaviors as deviant, abnormal, dangerous—criminal, in other words." The key to legal punishment is not justice, but power. In the case of capital punishment, it is even worse than the lust for power—it is revenge, the "public clamor for *blood*." For Friedman, the criminal-justice system controls behavior so that the burgher and his wife can rest easy, so that the wealthy can get wealthier, so that the sexually timid can suppress the shocking things that might otherwise go on in the dark among consenting adults.

Although the author admits toward the end of the book that crime can be fearsome and cruel, he dedicates his rhetorical skills to minimizing moral outrage. Unimpressed with the *justice* in the criminal-justice system, Friedman is not eager to invoke any visions of evil. He has little use for the ancient contrast between crimes that are wrong in themselves (*mala in se*) and crimes that are merely illegal (*mala prohibita*). We are too sophisticated now for such quaint distinctions, he suggests, for we realize that one man's meat is another man's poison. Yet, it is plain that the crimes that get the most attention in his book are not the *mala in se*, the yearly millions of thefts, hundreds of thousands of assaults, or tens of thousands of killings that terrify the citizenry and shame us before the world. They are, arguably if not self-evidently, the *mala prohibita*, crimes like doing business on Sunday, using contraceptives, marrying polygamously for religious reasons, practicing unconventional sex in private or espousing socialism in public, violating Jim Crow laws in the South. All of these activities have been or still are against the law, and they hardly overpower us with the stench of evil. "Crime in the Streets," a chapter heading, discusses traffic law. It does not discuss the mugging, stabbing, shooting, raping, and disorder of American cities in the late twentieth century.

But this standard Rousseauvian tale must somehow absorb an awkward fact: the crime rate has risen by about 400 per cent in the last thirty years. Most liberals absorb the fact and press ahead: if society's injustices cause crime, then more crime must show the rising tide of injustice *ipso facto*. To his credit, Friedman has not let his liberalism swamp his contact with reality. America is not less just,

Mr. Herrnstein is Edgar Pierce Professor of Psychology at Harvard.

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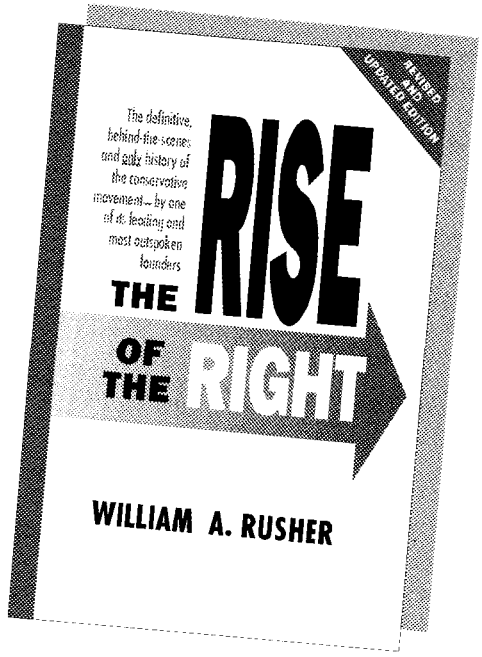
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he concludes. Crime has risen, he says, because we have become more tolerant of human differences, less worried about what we may trip over in the dark, less willing to allow the rich and powerful to call the tune. Yes, he acknowledges at the book's conclusion, America does have a crime problem. But, he writes, "Crime . . . may be, in a sense, the price society pays for an open society, a mass-communication society, a society that stresses individualism and choice." That would be Hobbes's explanation of rising crime in America, not Rousseau's, and it surely makes better sense of our times.

As much as he has moved toward Hobbes, Friedman has yet to follow Hobbesian logic to its conclusion. In the book's final paragraph, he writes that we should just "grit our teeth and pay the price" of crime for "our liberty." Well, it looks pretty expensive now, and is getting dearer all the time. For increasing numbers of Americans, the price is already too high—especially when this "liberty" has cost us and our children the freedom to move safely in public spaces and to feel secure in our homes. It is a good sign for us all that an intelligent liberal like Professor Friedman repudiates a fundamental tenet of modern liberalism when the facts weigh against it. When he finally sees that the price is too high, that the wrong people are paying it, and that the liberty secured is often false, he may agree that the *just* instrument for dealing with the *wrongs* that people do is the criminal-justice system. □

FILM

Misadaptations

JOHN SIMON

YOU can look at Robert Altman's ***Short Cuts*** in two ways. You can say that, as an adaptation, however loose, of nine stories and one poem by Raymond Carver, it turns something very close to gold into something very close to dross. Or you can say that, as a more or less original creation by Altman and his co-scenarist Frank Barhydt, it is vulgar, pretentious, voyeuristic, overlong, and, above all, contrived. After that, you can add that Altman has all kinds of technical prowess. But is that adequate compensation for a gross insufficiency of artistry, intellect, and taste?

Item: Three men on a weekend fishing trip discover the nude body of a girl floating in a river (Carver). How? By one of them taking a leak just where the body bobs among some rocks. In subsequent shots, bubbles of urine surround the body (Altman).

Item: A jealous surgeon asks insistent questions about a party three years ago, where his wife may have drunkenly kissed and even yielded to another man. She is expecting guests and trying to remove a spot from and iron her skirt as this interrogation proceeds (Carver). As she is not wearing panties, her blouse leaves open her front and rear, over both of which, especially the red pubic hair, the camera lingers lovingly. Thus her confession, eliciting lubricious laughter from the audience, is wrongly imbued with humbling hostility (Altman).

Item: The surgeon's wife is a painter, and her nudes, with the pubic hair often managing to loom large behind the actors' heads, are prominently displayed. When she is painting her sister in the nude, the surgeon comes home, and an awkward three-way conversation ensues (Altman—not in Carver).

Item: One of the anglers, on his return home, makes love to his wife, but then alienates her by relating how he and his friends fished through the weekend with the dead girl there in the water, and reported it only afterward (Carver). On first hearing this in the middle of the night, the wife gets out of bed to sit on the edge of the bathtub—to do what? Wash her feet, it seems. Why? So the camera can fondle her naked buttocks (Altman).

Item: A tough, adulterous traffic cop, after a night with his mistress, returns to his wife, the aforementioned painter's sister, and morosely gets into bed with her, only to be aroused by her foot massaging his genitals (all Altman).

Item: A young woman, a classical cellist, cannot get any affection from her mother, a nightclub crooner. The girl keeps inflicting real or imaginary injuries on herself, and will eventually gas herself in the garage. Earlier, she strips naked under the prying gaze of a pool repairman, and dives into the pool to float there like a corpse. (This entire inept tale was invented by Altman, so that the mother's nightclub songs can act as a musical bridge for the picture.)

Item: The pool repairman's unloving wife earns money at home by dispensing telephone sex, mostly sadistic, while changing a child's diapers or performing other household tasks, even as her shocked and neglected husband looks on with a hangdog air. Family quarrels and other loud noises do not seem to deter the clientele from fantasizing (all Altman).

Item: A couple spend agonizing hours by their eight-year-old son's bedside; he is comatose after having been hit by a car (Carver). The husband's father, living in another town and completely estranged from his son for thirty years upon being divorced by his wife, picks this moment to show up at the hospital, make a nuisance of himself, and keep his son from *his* comatose son with an endless self-exculpatory account of how he was seduced, once, by his wife's sister, which brought on the divorce (Altman).

The story "A Small, Good Thing" is the most moving of the lot. It tells how the dying boy's mother had ordered a fancy birthday cake and then, because the boy was injured on his very birthday, forgot the order. The hard-working, needy baker now keeps making phone calls to the family's home to demand pick-up and payment. The father doesn't even know about the cake, and the phone exchanges become ever nastier and, after the boy's death, downright spooky. Finally the parents angrily seek out the baker at work late at night; yelled at, he understands and becomes compassionate, making the hungry parents sit down, and comforting them with coffee and his fresh-baked rolls—"a small, good thing," as he calls it.

Thus in Carver. Altman, however, introduces on top of the baker's hate calls the nagging intrusion of the well-meaning but meddlesome and ludi-

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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crous father of the husband. This, of course, lessens the impact of the heckling and hectoring phone calls, and shifts the pathos away from the parents to the finally dejected old father.

But there is worse. Altman wants a unifying motif at the beginning and finish of the film. So he starts with an attack of Medflies on Los Angeles, and sinister, spraying helicopters cruising the night sky, aerial shots interspersed with short takes of how the film's various characters react to this seeming menace from above. He ends with a menace from below, a 7.4 earthquake (accomplished by jiggling the camera), in which nobody dies. But it is enough to muck up the gentle, touching moment of the baker bearing the tray of rolls with the building shaking and the three characters hastily seeking shelter. Other stories, such as "Neighbors" and "Vitamins," completely lose their point in the movie.

Those supposedly unifying liminal and terminal disasters point to a major flaw in the film—that there is, in fact, nothing unifying here. Medflies, earthquakes, the jazz singer's dreary songs (which only some of the characters come to listen to) cannot really connect these disparate stories. Altman also makes the characters friends, neighbors, relatives, or has their paths cross fortuitously, but the basic arbitrariness is not overcome. Though he has changed the locale from the Northwest to L.A. (which he knows better, and is cheaper to film in), you do not get a sense of this being a true cross-section of a city. Why these characters and not others? Especially since Altman and Barhydt cannot successfully stretch out what works on the page in miniature: an incident, an epiphany.

So the vignette of an alcoholic chauffeur and his lunch-counter waitress wife has to be lengthened to make it conform to the others, but the new incidents and dialogue are mere corny fillers. And making the sympathetic waitress the little boy's accidental killer does not make her a more evolved or endearing character. A good short story functions because it has a structure, a shape, a style that, together, create a sense of character and atmosphere, a rising action, a climax, and a resolution. If the story is padded out or interspersed with other stories, its rhythm and internal logic suffer. The conflation of ten stories makes climaxes abut on other climaxes, moods clash with moods. How does a damaged marriage resonate if it is followed cheek by jowl with a dying boy and his parents' grief?

And all those hammy or sleazy effects! Why would a girl seeking out her mother at work for some sympathy lug a heavy cello with her for no reason? Why would a naked corpse be repeatedly dwelled on if not for prurient

A Word from the Wings

DEAR Miss Alexander:

I congratulate you on your nomination as the first professional artist to head the National Endowment for the Arts.

As a scarred veteran of the arts wars, I hope you'll allow me a few words of (dare I say it?) advice. In *Henry V*, a messenger rushes in to announce the distance to the English camp. The Constable of France responds skeptically, "Who hath measured the ground?"

I have. I belong to four performing-arts unions, helped found a fifth, and was president of one longer than anyone else, chairing several international convocations on the arts. I was a second-generation member of the Council on the Arts (disbursing the then-staggering sum of $14 million per annum). I've chaired the American Film Institute and the Center Theatre Group, both clients of the NEA. I was Chairman for the Arts on the Presidential Task Force on the Arts and Humanities that, in 1981, endorsed funding for the arts as an appropriate use of tax dollars.

So, what can I say that will serve you in your awesome task? First, it *is* awesome—a brutal bitch of a job, impossible alone. Of course you'll have an extensive and informed bureaucracy, many of them capable, a few, if you're lucky, very good. Pick the good ones and remind them daily that your agenda is to serve the arts and the people whose money you're spending. Remember that the impulse of the bureaucrat is to expand his territory and his task—to find more things on which to spend more money, requiring more people. You must resist that instinct in those you depend on. A larger NEA is not likely to be a better NEA, but will surely be more vulnerable.

Our Task Force found and I believe the American people agree that some of their taxes may be spent on culture. In this time of higher taxes and a shaky economy, they're more skeptical, but still willing. F. Scott Fitzgerald said, "There is, in the American people, a special willingness of the heart." There's your mandate. Use it, don't abuse it.

Above all, understand that, while both houses of Congress support the NEA, they do this as porcupines are said to cohabit: very, very carefully. As has been demonstrated many times before, if any NEA grant offends a significant sector of the people who are paying for it, and if they then complain to those they've elected to the Senate and the House, you'll not only hear about it, you're likely to have the next NEA appropriation reduced.

The media, of course, welcome such conflicts. There'll be supportive columns with ringing references to the First Amendment and the artist's right to free expression, neither of which is relevant to your task. The Bill of Rights extends a broad, but far from absolute, protection of the citizen's right to express himself in public. There is no suggestion that this expression is entitled to funding by the taxpayers.

Some of your predecessors have run on the rocks on this point, needlessly debating irrelevant issues. A grant denied is not a violation of rights, but a choice, which you've been appointed to make. You will annually give millions of dollars of tax money to many hundreds of applicants. You will reject several thousands. That's your job.

I'm confident you'll do it well, bringing an artist's creative vision to a complex task. If you think I can help you, please ask me. The NEA is important to the country, and to me. Good luck. —CHARLTON HESTON

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purposes? Why would each young actress have a, however brief or partial, nude scene? Why would a boy, after a weekend with one of his mother's lovers, call him by the name of another lover? In a star-studded cast, only Madeleine Stowe and Jennifer Jason Leigh manage to score, while some—Tom Waits, Robert Downey Jr., Matthew Modine—are nothing short of embarrassing. None of which prevents the critics from outsalivating Pavlov's dogs.

■ An even more graceless adaptation is David Henry Hwang's own screenplay from his stage hit ***M. Butterfly***. It is based on a fantastic but true story of a French diplomat in Peking who had a long affair with a Chinese opera star without realizing that "she" was a man, or that he/she was really interested only in spying on him for the Mao government. The camera must come closer to the heroine than the eye of a spectator to an onstage character, and John Lone, good actor though he is, is far less convincing as a woman than some who have played the heroine on Broadway. Even the choice of director was faulty: David Cronenberg specializes in creepy horror (*The Fly*, *Naked Lunch*), a gift uncalled for here.

There are moments when the Chinese atmosphere is well caught through shooting on location, but there is slovenliness as well. The French diplomat's French wife is played by Barbara Sukowa, the most German of actresses; the heroine sings an aria from *Madame Butterfly* while hardly opening her mouth; the somewhat surreal suicide of the hero is turned into a quasi-realistic, but much more preposterous crowd scene; Jeremy Irons, the once good but rapidly deteriorating actor, plays the Frenchman (who is here made into an experienced man of the world, whereas this could happen only to a clumsy, inexperienced lover) in a fluttery, hysterical, altogether overripe manner; and even the worthy Ian Richardson is made to play the French ambassador as a zombieish character from a horror film.

Finally, despite decent production design and good cinematography (by Peter Suschitzky), the movie is forced to jettison the operatic quality that lent the play much of its interest. This Butterfly was broken on the prism of the lens. □

DELECTATIONS

Vegemaniacs

DIGBY ANDERSON

THEY usually say it as if it were a minor afterthought: "Digby, just ringing to confirm what time you wanted us for dinner on Thursday—we did say eight, didn't we? Fine. Pamela and I are both looking forward to it enormously. By the way, I did mention she was a vegetarian, didn't I?"

Did he hell. I wouldn't have invited them if I'd known she was a vegemaniac. There is only one word to describe the social relationship that ought to obtain between vegemaniacs and normal eaters and that is *apartheid*. Well, it was too late and they came and it ended up as it always does. The conservative cook is a gentleman, so we start with crabs, then go on to eels sauteed in olive oil with garlic, then salad of endive, Roquefort, and some plums dried, then preserved in and reinflated with Marc.

Pamela doesn't eat crabs. She is nervous about shellfish. She doesn't eat eels either; "all wriggly, I can't bring myself to somehow, silly of me, but there we are." The salad she toys with. The Roquefort is too strong and salty; and the Marc, she has never had before and would "rather not." It also emerges that she would have eaten chicken or even pork if it had been suitably covered up in sauce or camouflaged in pastry. In short she is not a vegetarian at all, just someone who is wet about eating.

Then there's the other sort of Pamela. Once again we get the casual call. This one eats the crabs and the eels but then says, "I say, I've just noticed, did you do this for me? You need not have. You should not have. My meat-free week is the first in the month." Other Pamelas eat meat on Saturdays; yet others eat it all the time: vegetarianism was last year's hobby, and this year they are into bicycles.

But whether they are vegetarians or other sorts of food cranks, they show the same characteristics of ingratitude, bolshieness, rudeness, and lack of taste. They are ungrateful to the Almighty, spurning all the good things He has showered upon them. They are bolshie in their contempt for all the wonderful recipes tradition has found for the good things. They are rude in their insolent expectation that normal hosts should lay on abnormal food for them while they never lay on normal food for us. And they lack good taste. Fancy putting a boring quiche in the rightful place of a roast goose.

Also, people who are cracked about food are usually cracked about other things. Go to dinner with them and not only will they insult you with aubergine pie, but they will talk about the need for bicycle paths and the beauty of Red Indian art. They get very annoyed when you point this out. Indeed, one of them has just brought out a book in England arguing that the vegetarians are not cranks. He roots through history turning up lots of them. The idea is the same as that maneuver used by homosexualists. "Look," they say. "If there are that many of us, and there always have been a lot of us, and some Very Important People have been vegetarians or homosexualists, then we can't be cranks, can we?"

Unfortunately, all the VIPs this fellow finds turn out to be roaring loonies. We learn about the absurdities of the Victorian raw-food obsessionists, George Bernard Shaw's obsession with the excreta of meat eaters, the Bogomils, Pythagoras' theories about souls and beans; about the frequent association of anti-meat and anti-alcohol crazies; about the 1890s "Fellowship of the New Life" for "Atheists, Spiritualists, Individualists, Anarchists, Communists, Vegetarians, Anti-Vivisectionists, and Anti-Vaccinationists." And we learn about Adolf.

Even better is an American, one Carol Adams, and her book *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. Her thesis is that you can't really be a pukka socialist unless

(Continues on page 76)

Mr. Anderson is food columnist for The Spectator *(London) and the author of* The Spectator Book of Imperative Cooking.

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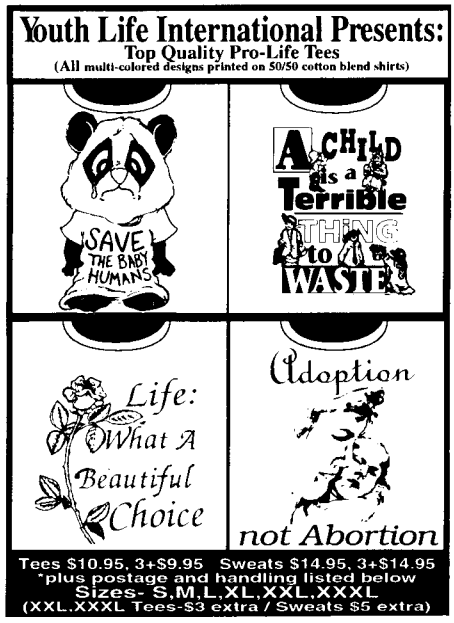
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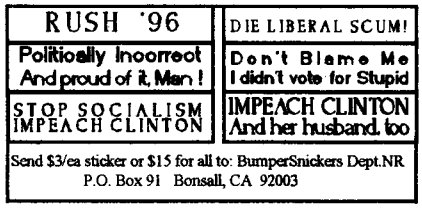
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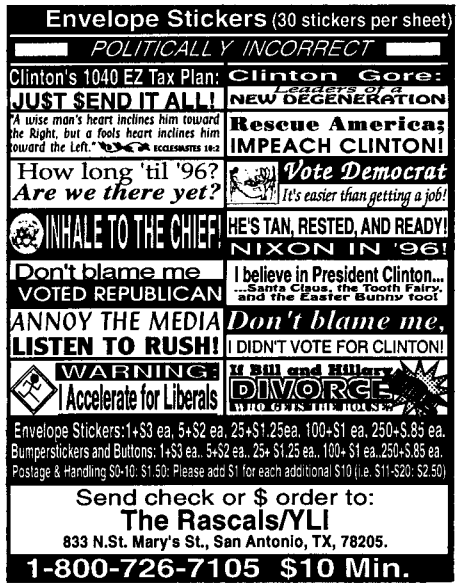
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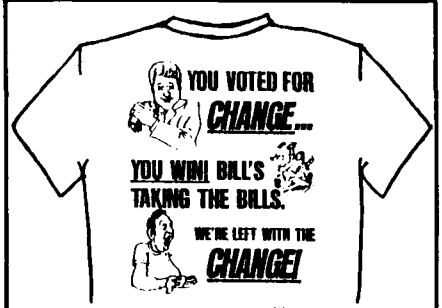

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ANDERSON
(Continued from page 72)

you are also a signed-up veggie, anti-racist, feminist, and possibly a lesbian. Likewise you can't be a pukka vegetarian unless you are also . . . She too roots around history but she finds socialists who turn out to have been lesbians and vegetarians. It is a wonderful book, pages and pages of barminess. Carving meat, she says, is like rape. Meat-eating is a symbol of male power and an index of racism. Her chapter "For a Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory" is—I was going to say a masterpiece. Best are her concluding lines, "Eating rice is faith in women. On this grace may we all feed." Amen, Ms. Adams, amen. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

My Life as a Fan: A Memoir, by Wilfrid Sheed (Simon & Schuster, 224 pp., $20)

IN THIS charming memoir, Wilfrid Sheed claims that when he isn't writing he worries about the Mets and the future of baseball. He should stop worrying, and write more about baseball. Arriving in America in 1940, nine-year-old Wilfrid quickly discovered a country filled with attics (for pondering baseball) and ballparks (for watching it). If he also tried to play the game, he prefers to keep those horrors to himself. Soon enough, though, horrors aplenty would rule his life, whether horror at Connie Mack's godawful A's, the Bums of Brooklyn, or the woeful Mets. It all began magically when he first emerged from the "appropriate tunnel, the birth canal," to behold the "most beautiful sight I'd ever seen": Shibe Park. By 1942 he was hooked. And hooked he has stayed, despite being abandoned by Walter O'Malley, "against" whom this book is dedicated. But why bother worrying about the future of baseball? Of course terminally greedy players and owners deserve to be rooted out. But don't hold your breath. They are always with us—but so are the fans. Mr. Sheed would realize this after wrestling my young son for the sports page or re-reading this delightful book, which deserves to be the hit of the season. —JOHN C. CHALBERG

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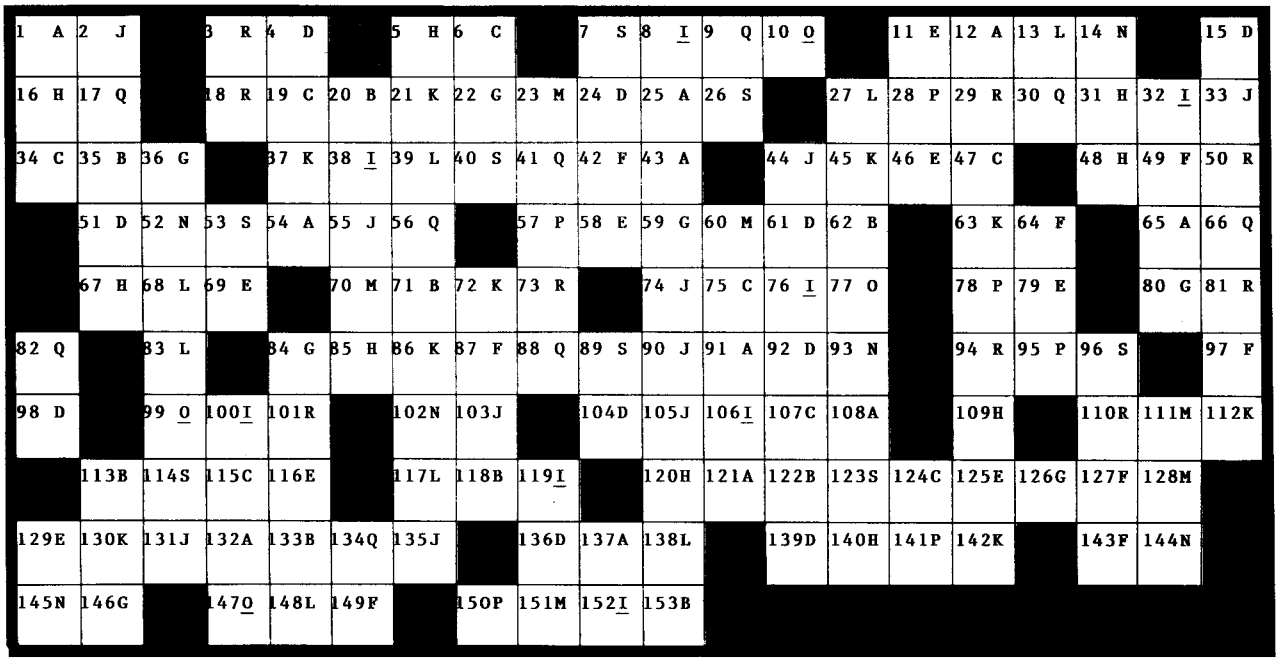

DEFINITIONS

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M. Dense — 151 70 60 23 128 111

N. Got the Judge Roy Bean treatment — 52 145 102 144 93 14

O. Chinese society — 99 147 77 10

P. Idle — 95 150 78 28 57 141

Q. Sakharov was one — 56 88 82 30 41 17 134 9 66

R. Love — 81 110 94 50 18 73 3 101 29

S. Ceding — 26 53 96 7 89 114 40 123

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. BRIT HUME: *Bill and David*: "Bill Clinton's record is that of a man fascinated with a multitude of policies, not deeply devoted to any. David Gergen should certainly be able to understand that; . . . whether he's the man to change it is another matter."

For Vol. II of the puzzle collection, send $5.95 (plus $1 S&H) to: T-Gram Plus, 309 S. Boundary St., Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

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Ditch Somalia?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 6

Concerning Somalia, a few observations:

1. The feeling among Americans, dutifully transcribed by prominent representatives in Congress, is compressed as follows: American soldiers are getting killed. The purpose in exposing more Americans to such an end is unclear. And it cannot persuasively be contended that any purpose in that country relates intimately to national concerns of ours. Therefore, let's get out.

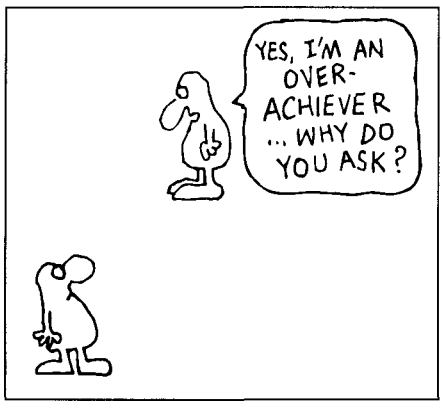
2. President Clinton has shown a reluctance to buy that line. On the contrary, he is reinforcing our military in Somalia. The same day he gave orders to augment the American contingent, he said something of dramatic resonance. The newspapers had carried a picture of an American flier, captive of General Aidid. What Mr. Clinton said was that we would hold Aidid responsible for the health of the American captive—"the United States, not the United Nations," he said, would enforce our commitment. With that statement Mr. Clinton severed a tether the United Nations has gradually imposed on U.S. foreign policy, with the consent of Messrs. Bush and Clinton. Clinton would not have phrased his statement in the way that he did without some reason to suspect that Boutros-Ghali is capable of maneuvering in Somalia in ways inconsistent with Mr. Clinton's primary tactical purpose, which is to assure the survival of our captive airman.

3. Bringing in reinforcements was perhaps influenced by the anxiety of the President to convince Aidid that the capture of one American, and the death of 12 others, is not enough to deter the U.S. from the pursuit of its objective. If the President is playing a psychological game, it is not easy to understand his strategy. If he were to take showy measures indicating a rapid pullout, even as Mr. Reagan pulled out of Lebanon after the slaughter of the Marines, General Aidid would feel reassured that he could do what he liked to his valuable prisoner. But if the warlord is convinced that U.S. troops are coming in now in sufficient force to find him and eliminate him, the survival of his prisoner becomes a matter of tertiary concern: Aidid would now be fighting for his own life.

4. President Clinton does not appear to be taking any political advantage of the special relation between Mr. Bush and the Somalian venture, any more than Mr. Nixon tried to make Vietnam Lyndon Johnson's war. Mr. Clinton several months ago pronounced our venture into Somalia triumphantly vindicated. There were a few ends to tie up, he was saying, and then the Americans could come home and we would all be left with the satisfaction of having come to the rescue of people who might otherwise have died of starvation by the hundreds of thousands.

But the political effect of that statement was to assume the sponsorship of the Somalian intervention. From that moment it became as much his own as if he had himself initiated it.

5. To restrict one's commentary to considering only the American soldiers who have died is to engage in an act of irresponsible reductionism. Arthur Schlesinger, railing against Desert Storm, said that the offensive against Saddam Hussein was not worth "one American life." That kind of talk is good & gratifying if its purpose is to convey how highly you appreciate American lives. But it is irresponsible in the context of a strategic perspective. A theologian can say that all the material goods in the world are not worth one human life—and we can understand what he is saying in the context of religious metaphors. But political leaders need to take into account that there is an incidence of danger in military operations which nonetheless can't proscribe any use of the military. Moreover, if the U.S. persuades the world that the death of a single soldier will deter a national purpose, then we are guaranteeing the death of a great many soldiers down the line: because our enemies will consolidate their strength and increase their appetites, confident of our incapacity to endure in our purposes.



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Much thought is being given to exactly when and under what circumstances we should pull out. And the case against ever having gone in is certainly stronger in the light of the difficulties we have encountered. But to say that our policy should be deactivated because of military sacrifices would be the equivalent of abandoning a police force because police die in the line of duty.

The time to pull out of Somalia should be soon, but probably no sooner than the elimination of General Aidid. □

Notes from Britain

LONDON, OCTOBER 1

If Mr. Clinton had been Prime Minister Clinton, he almost certainly would have been deposed around May; but of course under our Constitution he has forty months more to serve (as do we), and his irremovability gives him the political resources from which he has greatly profited in recent weeks.

But given that, in Great Britain, you can get rid of a prime minister by the simple act of replacing him at a political caucus, a certain instability moves into the office, and John Major suffers greatly from this.

The burden of the criticism is that he hasn't the convictions that might make him convincing. Then, too, he is apparently over-sensitive, in which case it must be a gross act of masochism for him to read the morning papers. And of course there is the brooding omnipresence of his predecessor.

An important British journalist characterized her effect on the country by remembering that toward the end of the Seventies, people in Britain took to "giggling a lot." It had come to this, that "the British no longer took ourselves seriously. After Mrs. Thatcher came in, with her resolution, verve, and energy, suddenly we stopped giggling. We began again to take ourselves seriously." The giggling, he observed, has resumed, under Mr. Major.

Mrs. Thatcher is in fine form. She resists airy formulations, enemies of com-

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mon sense. Thus when a reference was made to a "social contract" that, in Germany, binds together the welfare state, she demanded to know what exactly a social contract is, who signed it, what are its terms, and please do not be so silly. She restates her belief in free trade, acknowledges that most of the trading will be intra-regional, but says that to the extent it is trade from one major bloc to another (Pacific–Western Hemisphere, EC–U.S.), there is nothing to fear on the matter of jobs in the light of the experience of the industrial world.

"When I was growing up, air travel was primitive, there was no television, no electronics, no computers. At the turn of the century 50 per cent of British jobs were farmers or domestic servants."

Yes; on the other hand, 10 per cent of the British working force is now out of work and has been for over two years. The traditional pressures to work are not now there. In the days of Tobacco Road unemployment, people suffered the ultimate privations: hunger and homelessness. In Great Britain today, hunger and homelessness are against the law.

On Bosnia, Mrs. Thatcher is unsparing. The two lessons of history on which the West ought to have relied, she tells you, are that synthetic nations made up of component parts tend to come apart, as first Yugoslavia did, then Bosnia; and that aggression must not be permitted to prevail.

Her face shrivels up in contempt when she reflects on Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd's observation when it was proposed that the UN permit the Muslims in Bosnia to import arms: "When you get more arms, you get more fighting," he said. Replies Mrs. Thatcher: "I'm glad FDR didn't say that to Winston Churchill in 1940." Western inactivity in the face of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia "will live to haunt us."

One day earlier, Douglas Brown was the featured speaker at the annual conference of the Labour Party. He waxed most earnest about the great need for heavier taxation of the rich. Under Mrs. Thatcher, the highest tax had been reduced from about 98 per cent to about 40 per cent. Mr. Brown considered this "unfair," although he did not specify at what level, if ever, high taxation becomes unfair.

And that afternoon, the Labour Party, which is vaguely in search of moderation, kicked out Tony Benn, the last of the hard-Left cadre, from its national council. It was a hard blow. The dispossessed became a public figure in socialist Britain in 1950. He inherited a title in 1960, waking up one morning to find that he was Viscount Stansgate. This was too much for a committed plebeian, and so he began a lawsuit to renounce his title.

In the pursuit of proletarianization, he prevailed and returned to being Anthony Wedgwood-Benn. But he was still "Anthony" and "Wedgwood," and so he dropped the surplus last name, and truncated the first name. Thus he became just plain Tony Benn, causing his admirers to wonder why he didn't drop the second "n" in his surname. Perhaps that was what finally did him in at the Labour Conference. □

Delayed Reward

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 26

It is generally agreed that the arguments against NAFTA will be more vivid than the arguments in favor of it—because that which happens immediately is more graphic than that which happens down the line. A child fears the pain of a hypodermic needle, thinking little of a lifetime without polio. A plant that closes down in Fall River, Massachusetts, and is resurrected in Monterrey, Mexico, brings cries for vengeance from an afflicted community that will not give much thought to the cheaper goods that will invigorate the neighborhood economy a year or two down the line. Steven Rattner of Lazard Frères reminds us in *The New York Times Magazine* that when Massachusetts industry, renowned for two centuries for its output, left the state, heading for the South and lower wage scales, there was much weeping. Not very long after, Massachusetts, now a center of the new technology, emerged as the third-highest per-capita-income state in the Union.

A question has been raised about the apparent failure of American service technology to yield us the harvest it should have done. The question was examined in the *Forbes* quarterly *ASAP*, by Paul David, professor of economic history at Stanford. After the war, per-capita production increased every year by a heady 3 per cent. But in 1973, the growth diminished by nine-tenths—to 0.3 per cent. What happened was that the service industries held back the productive industries. And the question is, How can this be so, given that we were walking into the explosive age of the new information technology?

Professor David reminds us that electricity was discovered in 1881, was accepted as a substitute for the energy previously generated by coal by about the turn of the century. But it wasn't until 1920 that adjustments to electrical energy were made so as greatly to increase worker productivity. If you invent the bar code, which permits the druggist automatically to order from his suppliers one bottle of aspirin every time you walk away from the counter with your bottle of Bayer's, you are shrinking the number of people whose time is required to keep the pharmacy stocked. But if the warehouse doesn't have complementary devices to make use of the data fed to it by the bar code, then the introduction of efficiencies will be sluggish.

A friend of mine, an author, submitted his book to a prominent New York publisher and had a telephone call the next day: "Do you by any chance have this manuscript on computer diskettes?"

"Yes," he said. "I do."

"Terrific!" said the production manager. "That will save us $5,000!"

"No it won't," said the author: "it will save *you* $2,500."

A nice distribution here of a decrease in the capital cost of producing a book. But by no means have all publishing companies adjusted to the labor-saving devices of diskettes. My last ten books have been written on word processors, but not once has any of my publishers asked for the diskette.

If analysts are correct, the whole of America's productive machine is slowly but certainly adjusting to assimilate the revolution brought on by the computer chip. Already there are startling signs of its benefits. Professor David points out that 400,000 retailing jobs have been "lost" owing to the invention of the bar code. That "lost" is in quotation marks because we are today employing more people than ever before, reminding us of what we know intuitively, namely that an increase in productivity generates that felt demand which finite resources struggle to appease. It was somewhere noted that if we had to depend on the telephone technology of 1940 to handle the number of phone calls we make today, every woman between the ages of 20 and 65 would have to be employed as an operator.

It is very hard to persuade the public to look ahead a bit. Professor Edward Banfield reminds us that the "upper class," here defined as something that has nothing to do with income but rather with sophistication, thinks in terms of Tuesday, not of Monday. The demagogue will always preach the terrible results of a changed policy on Monday. Wiser men and women will look forward to the fruits of Tuesday. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Take Off the Kid Gloves

ONE REASON Washingtonians were so thrilled by the suicide of Vincent Foster, President Clinton's boyhood friend and deputy White House counsel, was that it confirmed their belief that Washington is a remorseless town, fatal to the faint of heart. The hometown paper pushed the theme relentlessly: a soft, sweet country lawyer tumbles into our cauldron of intrigue and succumbs in record time. You could almost hear the sighs of satisfaction.

This is fiction, of course, and shameless self-flattery, for the unspoken corollary to the town-without-pity myth is that those of us who live here and somehow manage to avoid killing ourselves are forged from finer metal than country lawyers and other ordinary mortals. But the opposite is more nearly true. Washington is an endlessly forgiving place, a mausoleum housing the largest collection of losers, coasters, and abject failures the world has ever known. Watergate veterans, Carter appointees, strategists from the 1992 Bush campaign, even Robert McNamara—all walk the streets undisguised and without fear. They spend their dotage lunching at Duke's, dozing in the Cosmos Club, and pinching interns at the Brookings Institution. It's nice work if you can get it.

Richard Berendzen understands this fact of Washington life as well as anyone. He is a savvy fellow. Throughout the 1980s, he served as the highly visible president of American University—a merciless raiser of funds, signer of petitions, holder of press conferences, and champion of issues, ubiquitous at cocktail parties, unavoidable at embassy soirées. His efforts transformed his university from a third-rate party school with a dwindling endowment into a third-rate party school with a large endowment. Washington officialdom stood in awe of his achievement until he abruptly resigned, in 1990, after he was snagged making obscene phone calls to women in suburban Virginia.

You'd think that a man who had survived such an affair would buy a one-way ticket to Madagascar. Instead, Berendzen, a true Washingtonian, appeared on *Nightline*. He then manfully accepted his punishment (two suspended sentences of thirty days each), enrolled in a program for sexual deviants, and negotiated a $1-million severance from the university. The severance was soon canceled, but Berendzen did return to his tenured faculty position, teaching astronomy to the coeds.

I still consider Berendzen's *Nightline* appearance a kind of landmark, a flawless distillation of the strategy employed ever after by celebrity miscreants seeking redemption. Under Ted's gentle probing the professor confessed, sort of, admitting that the calls were "inappropriate." (And how. In at least one of his calls, Berendzen fantasized about a four-year-old "Filipino sex slave," whom he kept in a dog cage and used as a "human toilet.") Apologizing, sort of, to those he "might have hurt inadvertently," he quickly donned the mantle of victimhood himself, revealing that he had been abused as a child. He brought along his shrink to grease his passage from scuzzball to martyr. And in closing he answered the call to service: Henceforth he would devote himself to helping those who had suffered as he had.

It was inevitable that so masterly a performance would balloon into a book. *Come Here*, published last month, shows that Berendzen's touch remains sure. The book is tricked out like a social-service brochure, with lists of toll-free numbers of child-abuse organizations. An endnote informs us: "The author will donate a portion of his profits from this book to organizations that combat child abuse." (Can we see the receipts, professor?) He reprints "If," by Rudyard Kipling, "who was abused as a child."

More remarkable is the text itself. His abusers, it turns out, were his mother and father. The father is dead and the mother is senile—lucky for them and convenient for him. The account of his own crimes is vague; he somehow neglects to mention the Filipino sex slave, for example. But he offers his exculpation in detail. He made the calls, he says, because "I was interested in finding information," soliciting from his (terrified) interlocutors the deepest causes of child abuse. "What might I learn? What happened in other families and why? . . . I was data gathering." The ways of scholarship have never seemed so mysterious.

BORDERING as it does on self-parody, the book begs the question: Has Berendzen, at last, gone too far? A better question: Is that possible? Glowing accounts of the book appeared not only in the *Washington Post* and *Washington Times* but in *USA Today* and provincial papers as well. His success proves that Washington's tradition of infinite redemption has been taken up by the country at large. None dare call him pervert. His publicists in the press prefer a more fashionable p-word. "It is a most gripping experience to listen to his pain," sighed Connie Chung, ignoring her own as the hook, line, and sinker slid down her throat.

"As an educator," says Berendzen, in one interview after another, "I feel that if you learn something, you have a responsibility to teach it."

For some the great well of American forgiveness offers a graceful exit; for others it offers a second chance. For Berendzen it's just another human toilet. —ANDREW FERGUSON

"I'm sorry I said you were a despicable little creep. It was a Freudian slip."

Mr. Ferguson is a senior writer for The Washingtonian.

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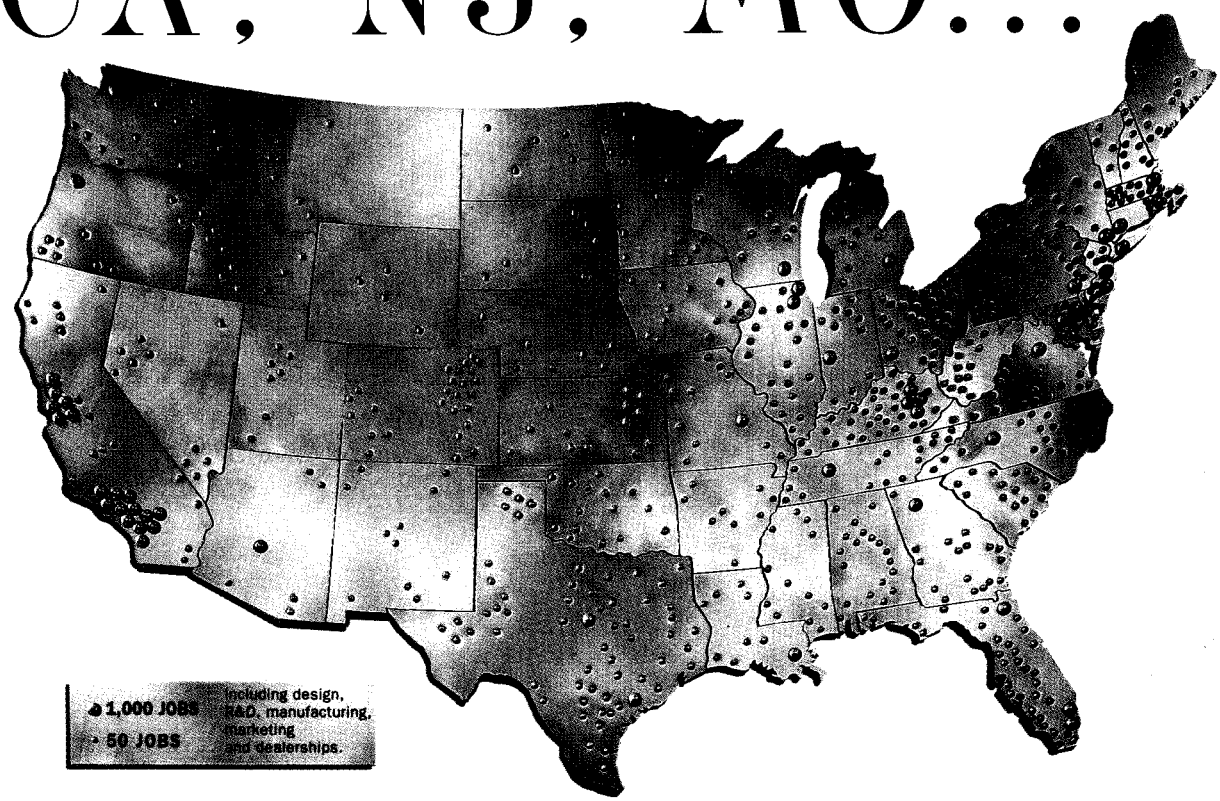

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